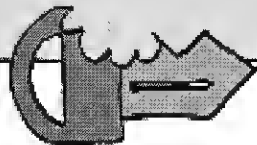
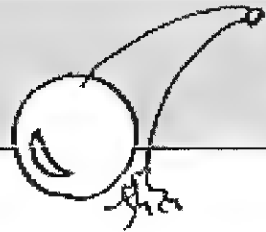
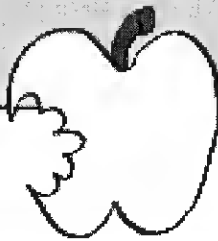
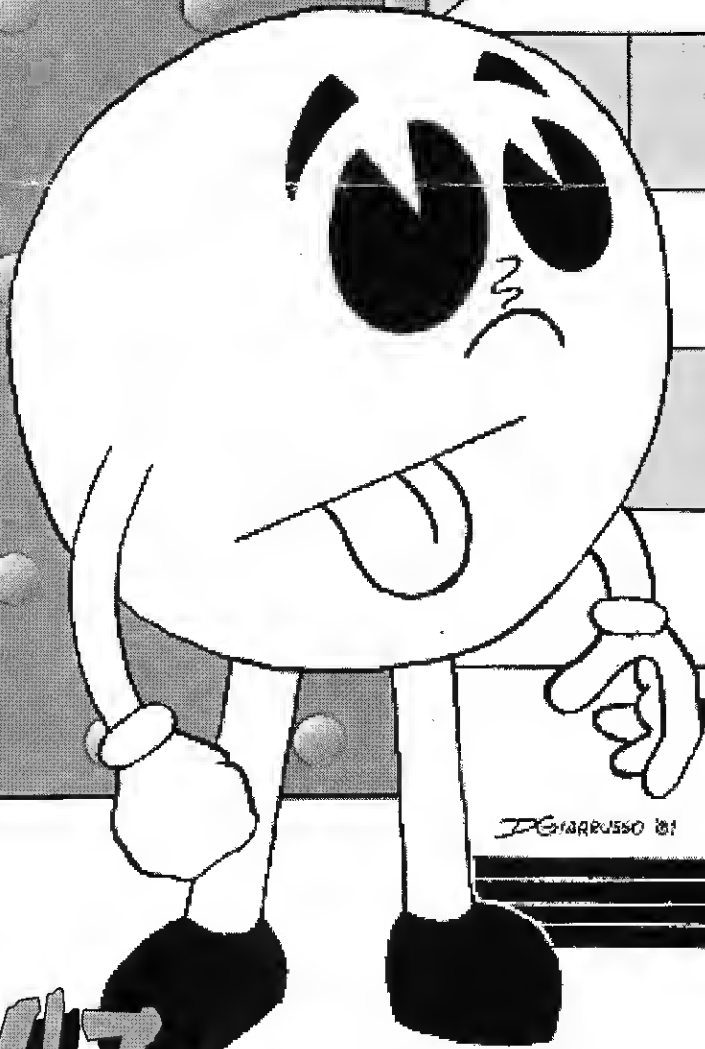


DIGITAL PREVIEW

THE Bio-degradable Source for Videogamers



GIARRUSSO ©1

#47:

leftovers.

leftovers. editor's BLURB by Joe Santulli

So many projects, so little time. Ah well, you know the story.

Since last issue, we've had a Classic Gaming Expo and several NAVA meetings. These are great ways to get gamers together, and I've met (and bartered with) lots of terrific hobbyists recently. Coming up in April is the Philly Classic. If you haven't already booked your tickets, get on the stick! I've included website contacts for each of these things, in case you didn't know they existed. Also since last issue I've taken on some freelance work for Tips & Tricks Magazine especially geared toward the collectors among us. If you haven't checked it out yet, give it a look!

This issue brings together all kinds of "back catalog" stuff that was cut from previous issues. So though we typically go with a theme, the theme "leftovers" is actually a combination of themes from the past. I wanted to make sure that some of the good work done by people in our past doesn't get buried forever, so here it is.

We should be on a more timely schedule from the next issue out as well—the actual layout and production of our regular issues is being turned over to Don Evanoff, who has been a contributor here for the past several issues. Don's "vision" of DP is right in line with mine, and he's got a better eye for layout than I have. Often he'll come up to me and say "hey, what's with the columns starting with just one word", or "you have your pictures in the wrong order", or "why do you even bother"... and since he's offered to do the layout, who am I to pass up this free service? In any event, expect some interesting changes in future issues.

We're well underway with the production of the next DP Collector's Guide, and if you haven't been to our message board let me fill you in: the new guide has been converted to database format, which will help us out tremendously with creating the book in a more structured format, as well as supply us with the tools to cross-reference games across system and quantify the rarities and prices more accurately. Past editions have been a real chore to edit, since we have so many people with their hands on the project, each with their own vision of how to present information (as well as the software on their PC's). This new format removes all of that, and forces us to make each section consistent. Besides the additional content, I think you'll appreciate the better structure.

Let's get rolling!

Classic Gaming Expo
<http://www.cgexpo.com>

Philly Classic
<http://www.phillyclassic.com>

NAVA
<http://www.digitpress.com/hava.html>

<u>in this issue</u>	<u>page</u>
editor's blurb.....	2
reader retaliation (mail)	3
so, you like porn	4
codemasters interview.....	5
wacky world of al.....	8
random reviews	7
ROMpage!	17
howie nation	19
supercade review/interview	20
Buenovision.....	24
dp fold-in.....	25
note-worthy.....	back



Pac-Leftovers
By Dave Giarrusso

If you've ever wondered what happens when Pac-Man reaches the limits of his appetite, the cover should clear up any doubt about it. Where does he go to purge all of this digested food, you may wonder next... perhaps a future cover. Not for weak stomachs.



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Editor In Chief
Joe Santulli

Senior Editors
Al Backiel
Jeff Cooper
John Hardie
Sean Kelly

Staff Writers
Larry Anderson
Ian Baronofsky
Tony Bueno
Roloff de Jeu
Clint Dyer
Don Evanoff
Dave Giarrusso
Kevin "tsr" Gifford
Howard Hirsch
Keita Iida
Russ Perry Jr.
Edward Villalpando

Production
Don Evanoff
Liz Santulli

Art
Dave Giarrusso
Nick Robalik

Special Thanks
Mom

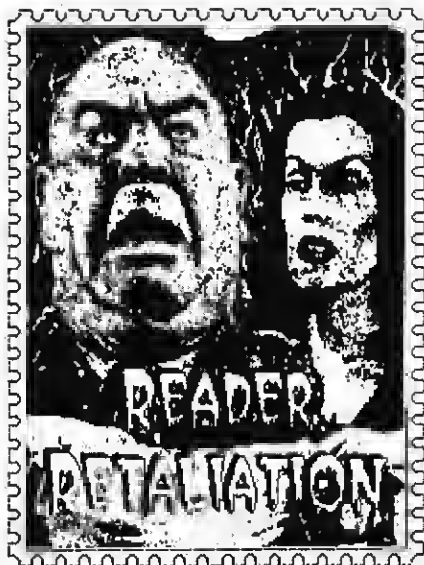
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Back Issues

Available upon request, if you're very nice about it, have load-of-cash on hand, or have very large breasts.

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proto paddle?

Joe, When I need answers I go to the best. Please have a look at <http://cgi.ebay.com/aw/cgi/eBay/SAPI.dll?ViewItem&item=1223137103> and give me your comment. I know 5200 paddle controllers were prototyped, but I don't think this is one of them, probably a home brew conversion judging by the chip in the boot ring area in the picture.

Thank you in advance,
Rich Gallo



Hi Rich, It looks as "real" as the one owned by a collector who turned one up about two years ago (I've attached pictures). I was thinking the first prototype I saw didn't have the Atari logo and the finishing touches but it does, in fact. The chip is suspicious but I'd place a bid on it I won't if you're interested in it,

but if you're not convinced let me know! It's always difficult to tell with these prototypes, but the thing show some serious age (doesn't anyone CLEAN their stuff before selling it anymore?). Good luck!



new 5200 protos?

Hi John,
Thanks for the mention in your prototype article. I'm getting all my prototypes (the 2600 ones anyway) dumped at CGE (Albert from AtariAge is going to do it with his 7800 dev. board) so I should be able to post

screen shots of my prototypes soon. I also got about 5MB more disk space so I'll be able to expand my page a bit. I'm still not sure how I'm going to distribute the roms yet, I may just put links on my page and let people find them on their own. If you or Sean have a way to dump my 5200 protos let me know because I'm bringing them along as well. Anyway, I read your 5200 proto reviews and I noticed you listed Elevator Action and Crystal Castles (with a screenshot). Does this mean they've been found? I know Joe thought that Elevator Action was on one of those huge disks somewhere, but what about Crystal Castles? Does this mean someone found a lab loaner? Is it going to be dumped? I'd kill for either game... No seriously, who do I have to kill to get these games? I knew CC existed somewhere, I just wish I was the one who found it. It seems I'm always one step behind, but I guess that's what happens when you only know people who know Atari programmers.

Matt Reichert
"Tempest 2084"

nut-job

Why is it that you use the ColecoVision version of Space Fury rather than the actual arcade one, huh? Here your promotin MAME shit an all that, but you have some poor 1K home version as your frontage. Thank you for your reply in advancement.
Leon

Hi there, you're jerkin my chain, right? :) Well, for one thing, the ColecoVision guy has more character. He's creepy looking vs the arcade guy who really looks like a stick figure. Don't get me wrong, I love them both. But you might as well ask "why don't you use the guy from the arcade MARQUEE", now THAT's a creepy bad guy. Also note we don't just promote MAME, we also promote ColecoVision. And about 25 other systems. So call it a matter of personal preference. Game on, brother.

When I got this poor responses I decided to just sit back and read awhile. I have read enough. I have read the posts on your message board about the "white sheets" and the slang. Your really a funny bunch of white assed crackers. You think because ya know more about video games your all of that????? Well look in your silk shorts kids. Leon has the last laugh. If you don't believe me ask YOUR wives and mothers. They have ALL played black shaft better than you kids could ever play these games. When you kiss them goodnight your kissing the black shaft too. You bunch of short sticks got no sack. "Sheet".....bad games and small shafts. What a bunch of queers. All this crap about gamin, like it's some big sport and the dudes are really out thier. How about you crackers

play some round ball with the me and some of MY boys. You can talk all ya want about "white sheets". But you would just look at your feet and walk by....like all the other tuff guy crackers in town. Hollow white wrappers.....with short shafts. THAT'S ALL YOU ALL ARE!! I'm looking forward to this show in Philly water some time soon. I guarantee to jerk more than your chain. I'll be the one pulling your arm off and beating you with it. Who be the stick figure then? When I'm done I'll then give your wives and girl friends what you couldn't give them. A REAL MAN. NOT A DUDE WITH A TOY THINKING HE IS AN ATHLETE One more thing. I have Speedvision, ESPN1 and 2. If this was any kind of "sport" why don't it be on these shows. They even show dudes racing lawn-mowers. Vendela- now there's a guy with character. His nice Atari tenderoni shit is off the hook.

Leon

Hey Leon, are you looking for work? We need another writer at DP.

nes find of the century

One Saturday morning I was listening to what is known in my town as Tradio. It is an hour long session to let people call in and sell or buy items over the radio. Toward the end of Saturday's session I called in and asked for old Atari games. Within five minutes I received a call from a lady saying that she would trade some Atari games with me. I acquired her address and went over to meet her.

As we were in a heated discussion over what was worth trading I looked over and couldn't believe my eyes. It was a TV set with an old NES built into the bottom of it!!! My jaw dropped and when I gathered my senses I asked her about it. She told me she bought it when it was new and proceeded to show me how it worked. I was amazed beyond belief. I quickly asked her if she would ever consider on selling it. She turned me down immediately and I was thinking of any way to get it. We finished up our trading for the day and I went home dreaming of the NES TV.

A month had passed since that day and I still had the lady's phone number for trading and called her up. When she answered the phone I asked if she still had the NES TV. She answered yes and I quickly offered her \$80 for it. She thought for a bit and then said yes considering she had some bills to pay off. After paying her the \$80 and hooking up the TV I tested the NES part once again. It worked perfectly. My next step was to e-mail Nintendo of America and ask about production numbers and retail price. The TV set is manufactured by Sharp and is 19" in size. Nintendo replied back to me stating that I would have to contact Sharp about it. Sharp's customer service required a model number

and I gave them that along with a description when I e-mailed them. Sharp replied back with a reluctant: dial our 1-800 number for we need more information on this item. I dialed the number and had to deal with about 10 minutes of automated service. I finally got a real person on the other line and gave them the production number. He told me that the model I had was only on the market from Aug. 1989 to Aug. 1990. He could not tell me any production numbers or retail price.

This call took place on the afternoon of May 16, 2001. For the past month I have e-mailed every Nintendo collector I can find and every single one replies back with a "Wow, what is that?!" My next step will be getting a digital pic of it and mailing it out to everyone in the video game community. Finally, I have a rare video game item in my possession. *drool* Well, that is my story. No bluffing on this one. I plan on sending you guys a pic within the next week and I also plan on seeing that pic in the next digital press guide. Thank you for your time and reading my true life story.

Sincerely,

Josh Brown (VideoGameMaster on gametzm.com)

Great story, Josh! You know, I remember seeing that television in catalogs in the early 90's. I wish I could remember exactly what retailer had them, but I recall thinking the same thing... wow.

musical fancy

Hello. I really like your site, it's really cool. I have the answer for the mystery game music contest from the "Saturday, January 27, 2001 02:28 PM" (as the page states that was when it was last updated). The music is the "Cathedral Level Music" from "Splatterhouse" by "Namco". So I guess I can be entered into that contest for a free subscription to "Digital Press" for a year, eh?

Oh, I can't go on! I'm a sham, a fake, a cheat! I've set MIDI files to be opened by "Cubase VST" by default as I usually use them to make my own songs or remix other songs, and the person who sequenced January's MIDI (Leopold McGinnis, or so it says) put alot of information into the track names of the MIDI, such as the origin and title of the MIDI. You may not be able to look at the track names of a MIDI in a program such as

"Winamp", but you can ir almost any MIDI sequencer. You see, I've (unfortunately) never even played "Splatterhouse" before... but the information was there for me to see. Hmm, I think I'll go play "Splatterhouse" after I'm done with this e-mail. I can be of help to you though. You can open a MIDI you intend to use in a future contest in a MIDI sequencer and edit the track names so that they don't allow anyone to cheat. I mentioned "Cubase VST" before, but it is far to expensive for your needs, so I would suggest you get "Massiva", a freeware MIDI sequencer for "Windows" that can be downloaded from <http://home.c2i.net/jaase/massiva.htm> or if you are not using the "Windows" operating system then I suggest you check out "The Shareware Music Machine" at <http://www.hitsquad.com/smm/> as it is an archive of audio software for "Windows 98/95/NT", "Windows 3.1", "BeOS", "Macintosh", "Linux", "DOS", "OS/2" and "Atari".

Geeze... I don't think I'm properly using quotations, they just don't look right when there are that many of them so near to each other. So, if you would like to give me a cool job (I have *tons* of skills) with an excellent career plan for my honesty, that would be very peachy. Hey, entering me into the contest for a free year subscription to "Digital Press" would be peachy too!!!

Seriously though, keep up the good work! Can I subscribe to "Digital Press" even if I don't win a free year subscription? How come I've never heard of this magazine before stumbling upon your site? Does "Digital Press" need anyone to write articles or what not? Does "Digital Press" have any plans to be distributed on the news-stand, in particular in Canada? I happen to live in Canada, so that is why I ask... but I'm sure you figured that out! Thanks for reading my incoherent rantings this far. I look forward to your response, and you have certainly got a repeat visitor! Keep up the good work, as it is appreciated! Anaki Muon anaki_muon@hotmail.com

The MYSTERY GAME link has been removed from our home page for at least three months, so you must have found it through some kind of search (?). Anyway, what happened is that your mail was routed to a folder that I haven't checked in quite awhile due to the fact that there isn't a mystery game anymore...

That said, some ANSWERS for you! I don't know why you haven't heard of us before, though you'd never find us on a newsstand - our product is a "home brew" fanzine, about 30 pages, no adverts, no color. We have however been in business for ten years, but it's a niche group.

Glad you enjoyed the site. You can subscribe at http://www.digitpress.com/join_us.htm if interested!

Game on, brother.

So... You LIKE PORN

In the spirit of our favorite Playaround and Mystique games, here are some titles that never made it to our Atari system but graced the small screen in a different format: video.

Funniest porn movie titles:

2069: A Sex Odyssey
A Pecker Runs Through it
Against All Bods
Bright Lights, Big Titties
Eat Me in St. Louis
Gilligan's Biland
Gonillas in the Mrs.
I Love Juicy
In Deanna Jones
Jungle Beaver
Lays of our Lives
Madam's Family
My Bare Lady
On Golden Blonde
Porn on the Fourth of July
Pulp Friction
Pumping Irene
Rambone
Romancing the Bone
Rumpleforeskin
Saturday Night Beaver
Soresst Rump
Take This Wad and Shove it
The Best Rears of our Lives
The Cockateer
The Sperminator
The Wizard of AHHHS
When Larry Ate Sally
White Men Can't Hump

Funniest Fake Names:

Mike Hunt
Mike Hawkerts
Stu Pidasso
Ivan Erection
Iva Woody
Yorrick Hunt
Mike Oxlorg
Hugh Jass
Hugh Jardon
Adolf Oliver Bush (probably the ULTIMATE fake name!)



Codemasters®

GENIUS AT PLAY™

Don Evanoff interviews David Solari

While at E3 for 2001, I decided to make a detour from the Tony Hawk half-pipe show and the Sega Press Fortress to drop in on one of my favorite game companies, Codemasters. Although based in the UK, these guys have brought us some wonderful titles on the NES, from Big Nose to the Quattro series. Their recent efforts on the next-gen systems have been stellar (with some exceptions, of course). Most notable of these great games has been the *Colin McRae* rally series and the *TOCA* series. For total rally immersion, on any system, nothing touches Colin. And the *TOCA* series has been so shamefully overlooked in the States that one would think there was a conspiracy against the company.

My detour proved fruitful, as not only were they debuting *MTV Music Generator 2* for Playstation 2 (if you're a fan of the first, the second should be a no-brainer purchase) but they were kind enough to sit down with me and answer a few questions about the company. One thing led to another, and my superlative charm convinced them into granting me an interview with the Senior Marketing Manager for the US, David Solari.



David Solari started with Codemasters in November 1998 as Product Manager working on all Codemasters products at that time. These included, *TOCA 2*, *Music* (the version before *MTV Music Generator*), *Brian Lara Cricket* and *No Fear Downhill Mountain Biking*. His role involved providing materials, demoing product and running promotions.

In the summer of 99, David was promoted to Assistant Marketing Manager. Still working on all products, he was responsible for developing marketing plans for all Codemasters products. Early 2000 he took on a more strategic role and developed international marketing campaigns for products like *Colin McRae Rally 2* and *TOCA World Touring Cars*. September of 2000 David began working on Codemasters US business by developing communication Campaigns for Mike Tyson Boxing, *Jarrett and Labonte Stock Car Racing*, and *Fox Kids Micro Maniacs*. Mr. Solari was then promoted to Senior Marketing Manager and transferred to the Codemasters New York office for 6 months to get a better feel for the US market.

He is currently based in the UK but takes regular trips to the US, working hand in hand with the New York based sales & marketing team.

The following interview was conducted through email correspondence (and in an incredibly short amount of time, furthering my argument that this has to be one of the most approachable game compa-

nies in the business). I decided to ask about some of their most recent successes, plus a few industry questions that a marketing guy like Dave might shed some light on.

DP: What do you find different about the US market compared to the European and Japanese markets?

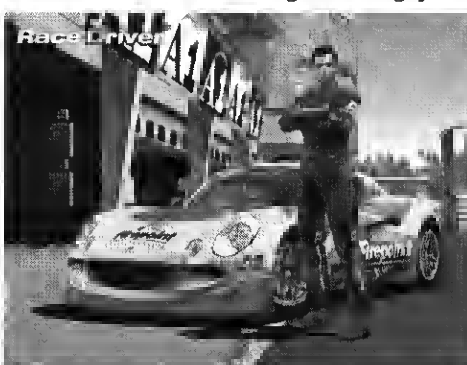
David: Well I have been lucky enough to work extensively in both Europe and the US. Probably the biggest difference for me is that America is even more heavily influenced by marketing and licenses. Sure these things are a benefit in Europe but you can still have a successful product without spending a fortune, if the products good enough.

DP: Do you feel this type of attitude toward gaming in America is harmful to the future of the industry? We've seen this preference for marketing over substance affect the release of *TOCA 3* in the United States as *Jarrett and Labonte Racing*, tying it in with NASCAR racing instead of relying on the merits of one of the most underrated racing games for the Playstation. Does Codemasters want to follow up with this type of marketing of its games in the US, or do they think it is something they have to work around?

David: For the actual industry it's probably a good thing as it means games get a huge amount of exposure because of the marketing money spent and the big licenses used. This means that the market for games is likely to grow. However, it's not such a good thing for gaming as a lot of smaller budget games with original ideas, either don't get made or don't do very well commercially.

Jarrett and Labonte or *TOCA World Touring Cars* (in Europe) was very successful in Europe and was probably our highest scoring product ever. However, it's based on touring car racing, which unfortunately is of little interest to Americans. We only had a short time to build news for the product so we used licensing to make it more relevant in the US market. The stark reality is, if we hadn't it probably would not have sold at all.

We have a new title coming from the guys who made J+L and we



have decided go without a license. We are calling it *Pro Race Driver* and it's quite revolutionary for a driving game as it is plot driven. You play the part of Ryan McKane and basically race your way around the world as the story develops. To make it work we

are talking about it really early and are focusing on the unique proposition which is the plot and characterization.

DP: What was the relationship with Camerica back in the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) days of the mid to late 80's? Was that relationship similar to the current relationship with Activision in distributing Codemasters' games (Colin 2.0 for example) in the US? Do you feel distribution through another party helps or hurts Codemasters name recognition in the US?

David: I cannot comment on the 80's (since I was not with Codemasters then) however I will say I think the video games industry has come along way in terms of size and professionalism. The way we work with distributors now is very different than then.

Obviously we would like to think we would have direct distribution at some point in the future, but at this early stage we are happy with our current distribution strategy.

I don't think having a distributor has a huge impact on consumer recognition, it's still our name on the box and we do publish and market our titles.

DP: Can you explain how the relationships were different then than they are now?

David: The relationships are the same for the most part, it more the ways of working and the scale of the business, which has changed.

DP: Does Codemasters have a strategy for achieving broader success in the US, like focusing more on PC games instead of console development, or perhaps providing games for a couple of genres, like racing or strategy, instead of creating a role playing game, a sports title, a platform title, a fighting game, a racing title, an adventure title, etc, etc.?



you don't plan on releasing the next *Colin McRae* or *TOCA* installment in the US.

David: I am afraid I can't talk about the titles we are looking at for the US market at the moment. As for our other games, as I mentioned before we are starting really early with *Pro Race Driver* so we can give it the best possible chance of becoming a mass-market title in the US.

DP: What have been your biggest obstacles or hurdles in the US market? (Interests that differ from the UK and Japanese gamer, ESRB considerations, lack of familiarity with game subject matter, like Touring Car racing instead of NASCAR or Indy racing)

David: There is always a lot to learn when you enter a new market. There have been a few bumps in the road, but after a year I think we are getting a good grip on things. We have had to spend time learning how our different suppliers, buyers and partners work. We now have a small team dedicated to the U.S., who know how things work and who are going to drive the business forward.

DP: What are the company's goals when creating a game? Is Codemasters a company that wants to create the most realistic gaming experience possible (*TOCA*, *Colin McRae*), or an extremely detailed gaming experience, regardless of the reality of the event (*Micro Machines*, *Cannon Fodder*, *Pro Pool*)?

David: Without a doubt Codemasters biggest commitment is to quality. Whether that is with regard to realism, graphics or just fun gameplay, we won't release a title unless we are sure it will be well received. When we make or sign a 3rd party game it is because we believe we can make it the best in its genre. I would say we have been pretty successful with products like *Colin McRae Rally* (Rally), *TOCA World Touring Cars* (realistic track racing), *LMA Manager* (Soccer Management) and *Operation Flashpoint* (War Simulation).

DP: As a follow-up, since Codemasters began selling games in the US, the types of games that have been released have changed. What began with releases like *Ultimate Stuntman*, *Dizzy*, *Big Nose*, mixed with *Gran Prix Simulator*, *BMX Simulator*, *MIG 29* has been narrowed today to releases like the *TOCA* series, *MTV Music Generator*, and other sports simulations. What has prompted this shift from the broader mix of titles, or does Codemasters feel their line-up is still diverse?

David: Games now require teams of 30-40 people and between 18 to 36 months to make. It's simply not possible to make the same broad range of games these days. Further if you are going to spend the millions required to have a successful game it makes more sense to do so within a framework of recognized themes. Unfortunately this means that some of the more out there game concepts tend not to be taken forward.

DP: But do you feel that not pursuing those "out there" concepts can hurt a company in the long run? Won't it prevent diversification of the company's game base, limiting its appeal to gamers who want something more than a racing game or a combat simulator? I guess limiting your development now will limit your growth in the future.

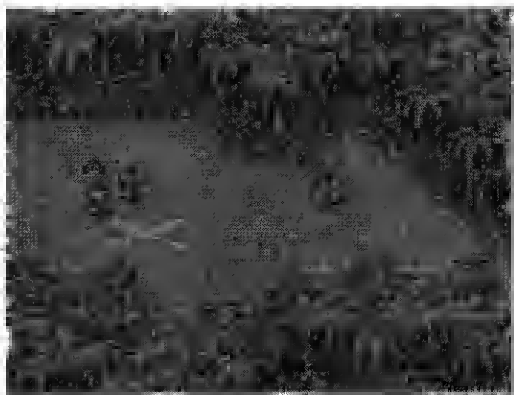
David: I hear what you are saying but making too many "out there" game concepts can also mean that you end up out of business. We have always tried to make or publish some original and innovative games; this year alone we have released *Blade of Darkness* and *Operation Flashpoint*. We have *Prisoner of War* coming early next year. These are all original products, and *Prisoner of War* really puts a new spin on adventure gaming.

DP: Another look at this is that doesn't that kind of rationale of developing only "recognized themes" hurt the industry as a whole? The disappointment of E3 this year came from the lack of variety in the games being offered for the coming year. It seemed everyone was going after the "recognized theme," giving us *Tony Hawk 2x*, *Tony Hawk 3*, *Madden 2002*, *NBA 2002*, *F1 2002*, *NASCAR 2002*, *NHL 2002*, *Final Fantasy X*, *Metal Gear Solid 2*, *SSX 2*, *ESPN Extreme Games* (take your pick), *Soul Reaver 2*; see a pattern here?

David: Sure, but these games sell huge amounts of copies, if people didn't want them they wouldn't buy them. You can't blame the games companies for making what the market wants. There were a lot of sequels at E3 but there were also a lot of good-looking original games as well, though most of them were based on recognized themes and genres.

DP: What are Codemasters' plans for the hand-held market? We've seen critical success for several Gameboy titles like *Pro Pool*, *Micro Machines*, and *Cannon Fodder*. Does Codemasters feel this is a viable market for them? Does Codemasters intend to develop for other hand-held systems either here or overseas (Wonderswan, Neo Geo Pocket, Gameboy Advanced)?

David: We have not done a lot in the hand held market. We do license our brands though and quite a few Codemasters titles are available on hand held formats. We have no current plans to develop more titles on hand held, outside of these relationships.



DP: *Cannon Fodder*. What prompted that title purchase and release? Why only a hand-held version? Will we see a future release of this title, either on a hand-held or console? Does Codemasters see potential in purchasing the rights of popular discontinued titles and developing them for other systems?

David: Codemasters bought Sensible Software, around 18 months ago. Sensible Software developed *Cannon Fodder* originally, so we were able to use the *Cannon Fodder* name. We decided *Cannon Fodder* would be perfect for the Gameboy and using some of the original team we did just that. *Cannon Fodder* was a classic title and if there was a really good design suitable for the *Cannon Fodder* brand I am sure we would consider it. I think there is potential for old brands to be resurrected, but quite often it can be intimidating as there is a lot to live up to.

DP: In the past, Codemasters has developed games for almost all home console systems (NES, Sega Master System, SNES, Genesis, Saturn, and Game Gear). Today, we have only seen development on Playstation, Nintendo 64, Gameboy, and now PS2. We've seen little development with Nintendo, no work at all for the Sega Dreamcast (speaking before the demise of the system), and only Sony in the foreseeable future. Why? Companies have complained about the difficulty they've encountered working with Nintendo, but why no work with Sega, why did we see nothing for Xbox, Gameboy Advanced, or GameCube at E3?

David: We evaluate all platforms when we start a project and decide if it's going to work from a commercial and game point of view. Dreamcast was a great piece of hardware, but it was soon obvious that we would lose out financially by devoting a lot of resource to developing for it. Sure we could have ported PC titles, but the result would not have met the level of quality we set for ourselves. We tend to wait a little bit until the installed base is better on new consoles, and therefore you can sell enough to make a reasonable return on your investment. This is why we have done a lot of PC software this year while the market for the new consoles develops. We have a number

of products in development at the moment and hope to make some announcements soon with regards to other platforms.

DP: I am more interested in Codemasters' console gaming plans than their PC work, but where does Codemasters see itself focusing its efforts in the future? Console or PC? Does Codemasters feel that internet gaming is worth the development costs, or do they see it as a recent craze brought on by Sega's efforts, only to drop off in the future, either stabilizing with a core group of users (PC or console) or a particular game?

David: We have no particular plans to focus on console or PC, we believe that we can be successful developing for both. Certain titles like *Operation Flashpoint* are always going to be more suitable for PC, where as car games and 3rd person adventure games like *Prisoner of War* are going to be more suitable on console formats.

We feel that internet gaming is important, as we move forward consumers want more interactive experiences and this is what online games bring. It is a challenging sector and you have to have the right product to be successful. I think there is room for market expansion in online gaming but I also feel that expansion will hit a ceiling. Then you will have this large group of people who either stick with a single game or are constantly looking for new online experiences.

DP: This kind of relates to your "recognized themes" statement, but do you feel a particular genre of game will have that large group sticking with it, and what is that genre? Since PC gamers have had a longer and more successful run with online gaming than console users, is this where we should expect to see Codemasters' focus on online development for the next few years?

David: Clearly persistent world games are where it's at right now and I would expect that to continue, but whether people choose to play in the Star Wars Universe or Middle Earth we will have to wait and see.

Until broadband becomes standard I think online is not going to take off in a big way for consoles, as for us we are keeping our options open.

The industry has changed dramatically since I started playing Intelivision twenty years ago. (Don't think I don't see some of you snickering when I mention Intelivision.) What was once a curiosity has now become an industry rivaling the scope and income of the recording and film industries. Those new demands for market share, bottom line, and title recognition have pushed the development course for new games in a direction some question.

I want to thank Mr. Solari for his time with this interview. He has helped shed some light on how a company like Codemasters functions in the brave new world of the gaming industry. Marketing for a game company is no small task, especially when doing it from a continent away. And for him to take the time to answer my questions is not overlooked by the readers or me. Special thanks to Ms. Chesler for organizing the interview, one of the jewels in Codemasters' crown. Next time when you're at the local EB or Funcoland, try looking up a few of their past and present titles, you'll be pleasantly surprised.





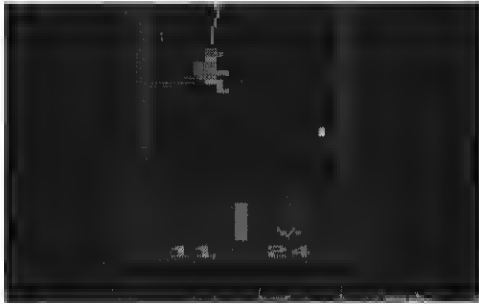
More Mysteries Revealed!

by Al Backiel

I have received more answers to the questions that I posed way back in DP #33:

Q. Is there a second screen/level in Ghostbusters II (2600)?

A. Thanks to Markus Graf, "You simply have to stay on the bottom and press the joystick in the down direction, do not move left or right".



Simple right? The instructions do not tell you that, but state that you must collect the three pieces of the shovel. Then they mention that you have to scoop up the slime from the bottom of the shaft (by digging

around I assumed). Actually, you have to stop swinging and continue holding the joystick down. After a while you hear some music and the title screen comes back, only this time it says NEXT LEVEL / BROADWAY. Then you press the fire button and you appear on the left side as a parade float representing the torch of the Statue of Liberty. Actually, you control a small spark of that flame which is just in front of it. This is a side scrolling shooter contest and it is a lot of fun. Too bad you have to go through hell just to get that point. There is a screen capture on the back of the box. There are at least four types of ghosts that you must face before you face the final boss (2 circling skulls). I was never able to get past that screen. It kept repeating the whole sequence until all of my lives were gone.

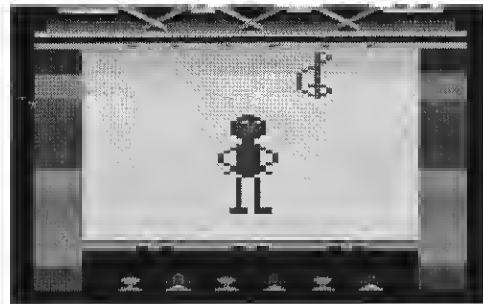
Markus had posted a message on the Atari Age bulletin board asking how to get past the second screen? I contacted him and sure enough that was what he was talking about and he was able to solve my dilemma. The only thing that I could suggest to him is that maybe you have to build up your inventory on Screen I and use the proper defense when facing the tougher ghosts on Screen II. I noticed that you can cycle through the bomb, bullets and shield, but only the bullets take effect on the initial screen. So possibly the others were meant for the second screen. It may take some experimentation, but this game might have an ending.

Since the first screen is very frustrating, I would only recommend this game to someone with a lot of patience and persistence. I have reached the bottom of the well about once in every 50 attempts. Here are some tips I can offer:

- Start out by dropping straight down like a plumb line.
- The only thing that must be collected is the shovel.
- If it looks like you can't get past a pitchfork, move up, then back to make it shift to the other side. It may be easier to swing pass this way.
- To kill the sawing hand, rapid fire straight up. Try not to climb too

high also.

- Use the plumb line method to coax the pitchforks then pull up out of the way.
- Part I of the shovel is on the left. Part II is on the right. Part III is on the left.
- You can tell what is on a ledge because it shows up on your status when you are close.
- There is one ledge on the right that will replenish your lifeline. It is orange.
- There is no way to fix a rope that has been badly cut. You may as well hit reset.
- You have to face about 3-4 sawing hands. More if you are forced to backtrack.
- As soon as you touch the bottom, hold the joystick down.



Q. In Grover's Music Maker (2600 prototype), what are the musical selections?

A. Here are some more additions that I got from Scott Stilphen and the Atari Age BBS.

G= My Hat Has Three Corners

(Must be. I can't prove it myself as I couldn't find a reference copy, but I have had another person tell me the same thing)

M= Go Tell Aunt Rhodie (I was able to verify this one)

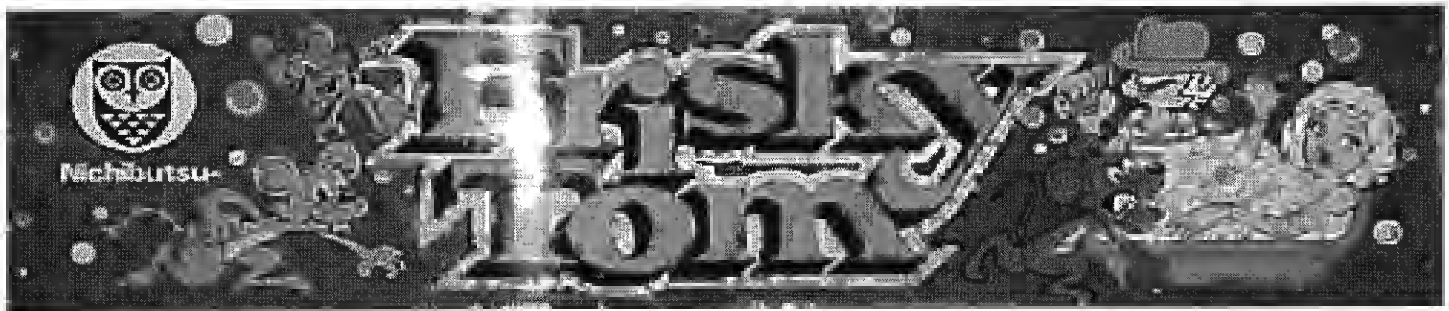
The next line after repeating the title is "Her old gray goose is dead". (lovely!)

R= unknown. This was wrong. It isn't Farmer In The Dell. (agreed)

That would leave N/P/R/S/T. By the way I erroneously called this game Grover's Music Machine last time. (Sorry!)

The only major issue left is the mystery word TEALPEHN in Blueprint. This was supposed to be a clue to a coming attraction. Besides anagramming into "elephant", another theory is that it could be "the plane". That was the phrase that Tatoo used to yell out to his boss from the watchtower on the Fantasy Island TV series. Could they have possibly grabbed this license? Or was this referring to the upcoming Wings cart?

The free software in cereal continues! Now you can get the complete PC CD-Rom game, Atlantis: Search for the Journal in the large size Kellogg's Corn Pops. There are editions of: Monopoly, Boggle, Chutes and Ladders, Operation and Yahtzee in various General Mills cereals.



Atari 5200

Atari

Arcade



**Review by
"frisky" Al Backiel,
grubbiest hands in
the east**

What do you know? Another surprising discovery of an Atari prototype. This time it's the 5200 with a previously unknown title. It fell into the hands of Best Electronics after Atari closed its doors. They in turn auctioned it off on the Internet along with a few other prototypes. I was the second highest bidder and got one of the two known copies. I can't say what I bid because my wife might read this (!). The high bidder got the other copy + 2 demos. Yellow Submarine (nothing to do with the Beatles) and Boogie Music Demo. The previous auction, which I missed completely, featured Save Mary for the 2600, which is my "console of expertise" here at DP. If anyone who has Save Mary wants to double their money, contact me!

Frisky Tom is a young boy whose job basically is to fix broken plumbing. This is done by picking up an elbow joint and climbing hand over hand until you seal up the broken section of pipe. You move similar to the guy in Crazy Climber except the screen does not scroll at all. The game starts off with one elbow joint falling off, then another shortly thereafter. Tom must patch the pipes before the tank in the up-

Element	Al	Joe	
Graphics	7	7	
Sound	7	6	
Gameplay	6	6	
Overall	6	6	

multi player same time	data save features
decent game ending	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	non-linear gameplay

per left runs out of water and ends the round. There are three lives and as far as I can tell, no chance for extra ones.

To make things more challenging there are white and red mice scurrying all over the place. Great! Now you need an exterminator AND a plumber. The red mice must be avoided because they are fatal to the touch. They can also dive bomb you if you are directly below - sort of like the flea in Centipede. The white mice are just the opposite and can be knocked off for 200 points. You can gain an additional 800 points by catching a brick.

There is a big problem with control. You move very, very, slowly. You can't jump out of the way fast enough. You can't stop on a dime. With these flaws, the game requires a lot of patience just to be able to hang in there for awhile. You have to come to an exact point, pause there, then climb. I think the left fire button helps you climb better, but I'm still not certain. The game contains music, sound effects, and even a pause mode.

So what is the goal of all of this plumbing madness, you ask? Well, if you have a good round and have over 2,000 bonus points left on the countdown register you get to see the "bonus screen", which is... get this... a babe taking a shower! I'm not kidding, folks! Before you get all excited conjuring up adolescent fantasies, I have to confess it's not as good as it sounds. You can peek though simulated steam and water and see that she is sitting down and wearing a red bikini. Damn censors! What a strange scene indeed - who takes a shower wearing a bikini? How many people take a shower sitting down? The girl has hair like Farrah Fawcett despite the

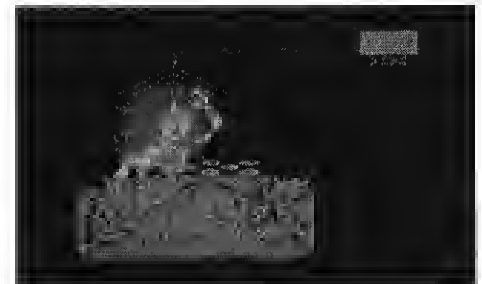
fact that water is pouring onto it. Despite this weirdness, the shower scene graphics are pretty good. It beats the main game's screens, as a matter of fact. The whole concept is a little risqué for Atari, and I figured all along that "Frisky" meant there was some sexual connotation to it. That's probably why Atari never released it.

There are a few strange things in this game that I haven't been able to figure out. The most perplexing is the "toilet mice". Maybe it's just decoration, but there appears to be a green mouse trapped in a cage on the playfield. Before every round, two mice go up the left side carrying what appear to be toilet parts: a ball float and other assemblies. Hmmm...

I'd love to get this game out to collectors by making copies. Atari, if you're reading, I could really use your permission. It seems like a waste of good code that only two players can appreciate (for big bucks). Avid collectors such as myself want everything made for their old consoles regardless of how complete the titles are. What do you say?



the screens are arcade-accurate. this is a great translation



hey kids! here's one way of sneaking girly stuff past your parents!



DESTRUCTION DERBY 2

Playstation

Psygnosis

Action



Reviewed by a man who thinks this is a driving "simulator", Joe Santulli

Element	Joe		
Graphics	9		
Sound	7		
Gameplay	8		
Overall	8		

multi player same time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	data save features
decent game ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	non-linear gameplay

Few will forget the fanfare that accompanied the release of Destruction Derby for the Playstation about a year ago. Next Generation magazine ran a five-page preview and a front cover for it, calling it "the most impressive Playstation game to date". As such, many purchasers of Destruction Derby were a bit disappointed that their new game didn't make their personal "most impressive" and many more Saturn owners wondered if Next Generation would even notice Sega existed. A year has passed, and the sequel hasn't received nearly as much fanfare. It's too bad, though. Because this derby makes the old one look... well, old.

It's not to say that the original game was a dog of any kind. In fact, it's one of my favorites. It is loud, brutal, and really fun to play. The problem with it is that it has several glaring problems that made you want the sequel right away. At least THREE of those problems have been rectified:

1) Cars not only spin and dent, they also roll over sideways, flip up in the air, and slide along the road on their hoods. Wheels, hoods, and trunks pop off. Cars burst into flames when they've been "overkilled". These are very noticeable differences. It always seemed a little funny to watch a car get

smashed in at 200 miles an hour and just spin to a stop. The new game physics also allow hills to affect speed and jumps to unfold into spectacular airborne flights.

2) In the original, you took your licks and were expected to limp to the finish if possible. This led to some really long races where you just had to keep the wheel straight enough to negotiate around the heaping wrecks and hope you didn't bump into something and lose your car. In DD2, pit stops have been added to almost every track, allowing you to "fix" some of the damage and continue. The computer is smart enough to do likewise - hammer one really good and you'll see the smoking vehicle turn off first opportunity it gets. Of course, it's better to finish the job if the chance arises.

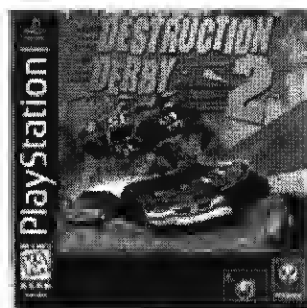
3) Although the game is called "Destruction" Derby, many gamers wanted a good racing title to come from it. It really wasn't enough to just include the bowl's frantic festival of metal shards, there had to be some kind of speed competition to go along with it. And frankly, the racing aspect of the original was just terrible. The roads are very narrow and lined with walls that also damage the car. Each track seems built to create crashes. Worst of all, these cars just didn't handle well enough to get any real thrill from the race. That's been fixed. The new tracks are much wider, have a shoulder in many areas to protect from too much scraping, and the cars handle loads better.

There are other improvements in the game, but those are the major ones. Most will notice some interesting lighting effects like the ones used in the Die Hard Trilogy driving sequence: a sort of "lens flare", that makes the game look televised. Nice touch. The tracks also have much better detail, and the music

is pretty good too. There are a few hidden tracks (selectable after winning tournaments) and "bowls".

Strangely, some of the GOOD features from the original have been changed as well. Whatever happened to the multiple camera angles? Now you just get the behind the car view and the inside view. The replay camera selection is gone as well, and this is much more noticeable. Now the races appear exactly as they do in the regular game. From behind the car. No more placing the camera high above the track to follow the action. I really miss that. Also, the announcer has been replaced. I really liked the original guy, he had a sort of "Raceway Park" enthusiasm and an English accent. The new guy is rather dull. He's not terrible, but he's not as good as the last game.

What it all comes down to is the action. I'm happy to say that although there are sometimes hundreds of little scraps of metal flying through the air with a dozen cars all jockeying for position (describing the first ten seconds of a typical race), the frame rate and speed don't suffer much. There is a noticeable drag in these situations, but you'll be glad it's happening - it can be very difficult to react to so many vehicles trying to pound you into the



an "oldie" (by our standards) but still a great time



lighting effects, smoke, incrementing damage effects... this was a big deal

chiki chiki BOYS

rAnDm
ReVieWs

Genesis

Sega

Action



Game review by
chiki-boy Jess
Ragan

Element	Jess	Joe	
Graphics	10	9	
Sound	9	9	
Gameplay	7	6	
Overall	8	8	

<input type="checkbox"/>	multi player same time	<input type="checkbox"/>	data save features
<input type="checkbox"/>	decent game ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	hidden stuff
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	variable skill levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	non-linear gameplay

To my knowledge, there isn't a single game that springs to mind that is more cur-tailed to to younger set without scrifrcing its integrity as a high quality title. For reasons unknown, Capcom % Sega brought this cart overseas, but i an going to complain about? No. If you haven't guess by now, that as good a recommendation as any, so i highly advise that you check this out for your sake as wellas the sakw of your kids. the dumb title msay be a deterrent, but like the ever-so-sweet durian & its evr-so-ripe smell, one you get oast the nrgativesm you get treated to some wonderful pluses.

You play as one of two swordsmen- er, boys-which you can christen iwht your own 4 letter name (one of those intagibles that slipped by joe, I suppose). After this for-mality has been taken care of , you get to chhose from three areas with differing ele-vation distinguishing each. Chose roun one anf you off on a jolly little romp above & then underground, each with pastels that literally leap right into your face. Choose round 2 & your character dons scuba gear & dives into the wild blue, fighting fish of all shapes & sizes. Round 3 takes you into and above the clouds & pits you against a

surprisingly versatile two-headed dragon. Finish them all. & those of you who had picked normal or hard to get travel through more strange & exhilarating locales, with bosses like Caracula (the vampire in the boxers) & Benrasp (a man made entirely of pea-that's as in the green veggie- who sics a squad of demented beans after you). Beat them all and face off against the vile clown Rophotman in a duel to the fin-ish. End of story.

Wait! I'm not REALLY finished! What separates C2 Boys from others of its ilk are those famed Capcom touches which Sega's programmers adapted perfectly when they translated this for home use. Nothing seems compromised, a far cry from today's normal fare on this tortured system. The graphics are almost PERFECT-very very well drawn with just the right shades of colors; not too watery but not outright garish. as a result, you feel immersed in the game, a trek through a jungle FEELS lush & mysterious; you can almost feel the world blowing through your hair in the aerial scenes; you can nearly smell the musty aroma in the caverns. Ef-fective graphics? oh yes.

The music is brilliant as well, although it admittedly does suffer from the constraints of the Z-80A chip in the Genesis. The sound programmers went for a high tech, mystical feel which fits any & every situa-tion (highly intense & dramatic in boss fights, while relatively easy going in the appropriate areas precisely. Problem is, some of these tracks become grating & repetitive in their vy to fit the mood (the Rophotman selection will literally give you a headache), but nevertheless very in-

spired. One track sounds suspiciously like John Williamses' famed Spielberg tunes (y'know, the ones that hide the fact that Speil has no actual movie-making talent?)-something I was quick to note the second I heard it, so you pretty much got it all here.

The gameplay is here C2 Boys suffers. it's very limited, numbingly straightforward, & slow-paced. Kids won't mind this, how-ever, as the pace is more or less set for the younger set & they won't be needlessly confused over extra options. For the adult crowd, the game can be set to hard where it becomes more than menacing enough for anyone's tastes. The control is easy to use and responsive; very important for any game, despite its target audience.

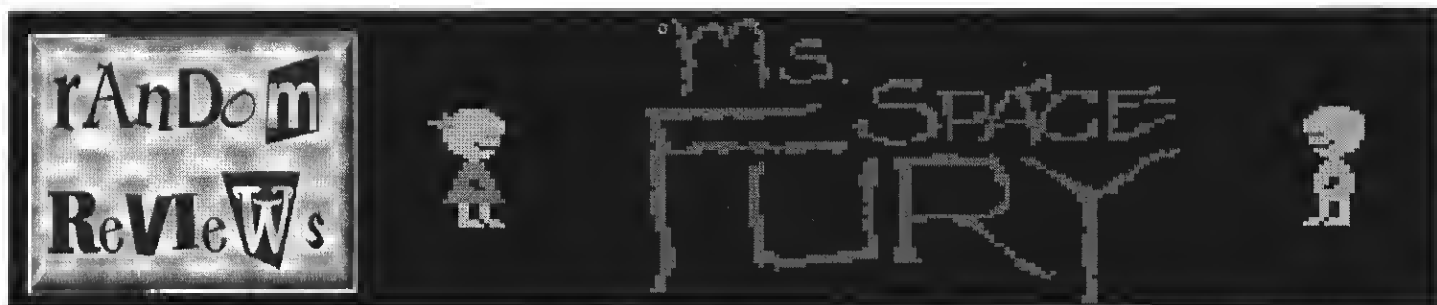
When all is said and done, C2 Boys packs in enough fun for younger players without leaving the older ones out in the cold. It's a Capcom design; how could it? Pick it up if you see it cheap or I'll be forced to remove the logo from my caricature (& keep the electron microscope jokes to yourself, OK?!)



chiki chiki boys is the japanese version of "mega twins"



it's not the most popular arcade game, but the genny convert is spot on.



ColecoVision

Digital Press

Platform



**A furious review
by the normally
mild-mannered
Backiel**

Element	AI	Joe	
Graphics	9	8	
Sound	8	9	
Gameplay	7	9	
Overall	8	9	

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	multi player same time	<input type="checkbox"/>	data save features
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	decent game ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	hidden stuff
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	variable skill levels	<input type="checkbox"/>	non-linear gameplay

Part I: The making of Ms. Space Fury

This years' Classic Gaming Expo and the 10th Anniversary of Digital Press happen to coincide. Obviously, DP wanted to do something special to mark the occasion. What better way than to release an original game for a classic system? Several game developers were contacted, but the job went to Daniel Bi-venu, who had written a few homebrews for ColecoVision (BUSTin Out, Dac-Man). Joe Santulli came up with the title and concept and provided support. A lot of people pitched in to help. Daniel brought in Sylvain ('Sly DC') De Chantal to design most of the levels and assist with the graphics. Marcel de Kogel wrote the emulator the game was compiled and tested on. As the project neared completion, Dave Giarrusso designed the artwork for the label and the instruction manual (as well as the full page advertisement shown in the last issue of DP as well as the CGE2K1 show program). Even veteran homebrew author John Dondzila lent his expertise on cod-

ing and debugging the program. Most of the communication and brainstorming was done via the Internet through email and instant messenger—something the designers of old didn't have at their disposal.

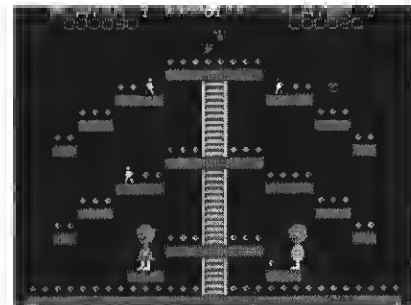
Finally, when the game was complete there were ten levels. After the game was downloaded to a ROM, it was discovered that it wouldn't load on the actual console! After nearly giving coordinator Santulli a heart attack, John Dondzila was consulted and solved the problem. During his testing there were issues that had to be addressed such as heavy flickering and fatal errors. These were eventually worked out, and Santulli survived from near-coronary condition. Ironically when the bugs were fixed it freed up a lot of storage, so an additional ten levels were eventually added. There was not much time left but Santulli, with the aid of fellow CGE organizer and DP guy John Hardie managed to do the soldering and construction of 40 cartridges in time for a Classic Gaming Expo release.

When the scheduled release time arrived at the show a long queue had formed. The games sold out within ten minutes. Even the promotional posters (with Dave G's artwork) were taken. Most Expo-goers managed to at least play the demo that was set up. Their comments were consistently positive.

cent graphics plus: title, credits, completion, game selection and high score screens. Basically, this game is a combination of Space Fury and Miner 2049er and has one or two player modes with 4 difficulty levels each. The 1-player game is against the clock. The 2-player simultaneous mode is for high score. The two player version really shines because besides scrambling to pick up the most coins, you can grab a power-up icon to freeze your opponent and scarf up a bunch of coins before he snaps out of it. If one player loses all their lives the remaining player is free to play out the game. This is a platformer, but if you miss a landing you won't plunge to your doom, which makes the game a whole lot less frustrating than some of the genre. Dropping through the bottom floor will transport you back to the top. This can be used as a shortcut sometimes. The controls may take some getting used to. You can make big jumps and even float to some degree. There are UP and DOWN transports on most screens. Running interference are little



unveiled and shamelessly
distributed at CGE2K1



one or two players, but the two player
game is the real draw

Part II: Ms. Space Fury Review

The final result of all this activity is a very nicely done and highly playable game with 20 challenging levels and de-

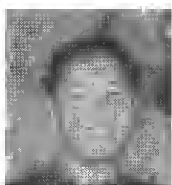
TEMPEST 2000



Jaguar

Atari

Arcade



**Remember Keita
Ida? We dug him
up to review this
spectacular game**

Element	Keita	Joe	
Graphics	9	8	
Sound	10	10	
Gameplay	10	10	
Overall	10	10	

multi player same time	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	data save features
decent game ending	<input type="checkbox"/>	hidden stuff
variable skill levels	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	non-linear gameplay

Often times, bringing out a good sequel can be one of the most difficult things to pull off. The task was supposed to be even harder in this case, given that Dave Theurer's original Tempest was a smash hit in the arcades and is as loved by classic fans today as it was during its heyday. Remarkably, however, Jeff Minter has managed to preserve the intensity of the vector graphics-based original (which is no small task) while adding enough fresh elements into this version to consider it a complete upgrade.

For those of you who've never had the pleasure of playing Atari's coin-op classic, I feel sorry for you. The original Tempest was pure gaming bliss, and can be considered the Pac-Man or Tetris of shooters because it's one of those games that is so unique and wonderful that nobody's really tried to emulate it because they know they'd fail. Even twelve years later, it's just as addicting as ever. In both Tempest and T2K, you maneuver a claw-shaped ship on the outer edges of a web-like vortex, trying to shoot down enemies that rise from the core at the other end. After eliminating all the foes in that have been thrown your way, you move onto a more challenging stage.

This cartridge features four different play

options. Traditional Tempest is a port - albeit a rather poor one - of the original game. Tempest Plus adds a few new levels and allows for cooperative play via a second player or a computer assistant. Tempest Duel is a deathmatch between two players that utilizes the Tempest 2000 engine. The real star in this compilation, of course, is Tempest 2000.

Tempest 2000 is far more than merely a graphically enhanced version of Tempest. It features one hundred different boards, sweet bonus stages, new enemies, and a slew of new power-ups. The ability to jump is a tremendous add-on, and the particle blaster and the AI droids that destroy anything that gets close to you are also nice additions. But the snazziest new feature is unquestionably the "Melt-O-Vision" effect. It's really psychedelic something that you've got to see for yourself since it's difficult to describe in detail.

Up to a point, you can get by with using the same method of play as one usually does with shooters. That is, by just mindlessly blasting away everything that comes your way. You'll quickly realize, though, that there are lots of subtleties in Tempest 2000 that make you think. Even after you've become good at this game, you MIGHT think all

you're doing is getting by on reaction skills alone, but sharp players will realize that it's more a matter of human brain power working its magic as you get "in-the-zone" in an almost zen-like state. Getting into this hypnotic state is one of the best feelings that you'll ever experience while playing a video-game! You really won't know why you're kicking ass in one game and stinking it up in another. But it's such a great adrenaline rush that you'll want to play "just one more level" so that you'll get into the groove yet again.

Part of the reason the game gets you some pumped up is due to the awesome music. Your excitement level will reach a boiling point when your heart starts pumpin' to the excellent techno soundtrack. And it doesn't stop there. The sound of the voice samples, explosions, weapon fire and superzapper are also top notch and draw you into the game like few games have ever managed to do.

I'll just sum up Tempest 2000 by proclaiming it to be one of the wildest, thrilling, adrenaline-inducing shooters to come out in a long time. Only Robotron: 2084 and the original Tempest have managed to serve up the same kind of gaming ecstasy as this masterpiece.



there are few power-ups more useful
than the fabled "ai droid"



... except for perhaps the "particle
laser"



bwahahahaha! eat electric death, you
cyber creeps!

FIFA SOCCER

ELECTRONIC ARTS, FOR GENESIS

Joining the ranks of *NHL Hockey '94* and *Madden '94* in the category of "classic sports games" is *FIFA Soccer* by Electronic Arts. I spotted this one at the CES in Chitown last summer and knew they had hit the mark. The national teams of over forty countries have been rated for this World Cup simulation. From powerhouses like Italy and Brazil to the lowly Qatar squad - does anyone even know what street Qatar is on?

I don't believe soccer translates as well into a video-game as does football or hockey. More than any other sport, there is a need in a soccer game to see as wide of an area of the field as possible. This couldn't be done, of course, without some major sacrifices in gameplay.

Even with that disclaimer this is a great game! All of the moves are there - bicycle kicks, headers, sliding tackles... and for you dirty players out there, they threw in yellow (and red) cards. To become a quality passer will take some time - there is a temptation to just give the ball a boot and try to be the first one to reach it. The purists out there will need a little practice to make those nice crisp passes consistently. Play the World All-Stars vs. Quatar to sharpen your skills.

Anyone who has seen a match on public TV broadcast from Europe will recognize the singing that continues for much of the game. I can't figure out what they're chanting, but it sounds great. If *FIFA Soccer* doesn't put you on the mid-field line at Wembley Stadium then the fault lies within yourself, pal! So pick this one up and go have a super kick-about. - Karl Youngman

PANZER DRAGON

SEGA, FOR SATURN

One of the greatest problems faced by new systems are those "first generation" blues, where the games that are released at system launch time really don't show off what that system can do. Remember Genesis' *Altered Beast*? Super Nintendo's *Super Mario World*? 3DO's *Mad Dog McCree*? How about 32X *Cosmic Damage*? They all show that the system can do more than its predecessor, but not substantially so. The Saturn has leaped that hurdle. *Panzer Dragoon* is a marvelous first-generation game. It looks and feels more like an arcade game than any other system launch has stated it would be. You've seen pictures of it, and those look awfully good, but boy - you have to play it to really appreciate it. At its core, *PD* is a simple shooter that plays very much like *StarFox*. You're riding on top of a dragon whose flight path is pre-determined. You can turn 360 degrees to fire all around you, but you can't actually turn the dragon around. The effects are outstanding, with several show-stoppers on each level. Gigantic enemies float effortlessly across your screen without slowdown or flicker, and a dramatic soundtrack enhances the surreal atmosphere. Some gamers may complain that *PD* lacks power-ups and energy restores, but as I said in my *Tempest 2000* review several issues ago, it's the simple shooters that keep you coming back. If you can't finish the level, it's not because you missed something. You just aren't good enough yet.

This should be your first purchase for the Saturn. - Joe Santulli



PODFUL MAIL

WORKING DESIGNS, FOR SEGA CD

A prozine posed the question: "Is this an action game or an RPG?". After defeating the game in only twelve hours (I did not rush through it), my answer is that it is a 90% ordinary platform/action contest with 10% of RPG sprinkled on top. You collect gold and upgrade armor and weapons but experience points, level class and character attributes - standard characteristics of any RPG - are not present. This is a linear quest and each area on the map must be conquered in a specific order, as there is no map exploration. There are some cool anime sequences between each of the five scenarios but some very silly dialogue with the levels themselves. Many of the bosses and mini bosses do not pose much of a challenge because safe spots are abundant. This is classified as an RPG for novices, but it is more of a platform challenge with a thin story line. - Kevin Oleniacz (4)

PINK GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

FOR SUPER NES

Inspector Clouseau relentlessly pursues the Pink Panther in the popular cartoon. The hunt continues on the SNES through a dozen mock movie sets, which range from "Honey, I Shot the 'pink' to 'Pinkenstein'". The crisp cartoony graphics are the highlight of an otherwise ordinary platform challenge.

Armed with a spray can filled with pink (along with a deadly jump attack) defend yourself against an onslaught of antagonistic cast members (humans and animals) as well as flying food, ghosts, seafish and various other threats. In addition to the basic attacks, especially limited "tricks" are scattered throughout the game which provide special abilities. A stop light freezes foes. A bowling ball knocks over enemies. A fly swatter smacks pesky attackers. There are seven distinct "tricks" in all. You can also find unique tokens are utilized for the purpose of reaching normally unattainable areas. Once dropped in a toll slot, these produce bridges, stairs, cargo hooks, steerable magic carpets, or an umbrella which carries your character straight up. The bridge token is also used on the end-of-game/continue screen. If you're short on these then the game concludes. Climbing up cords and ropes or locating doors which reveal warps are the other modes of travel.

As I mentioned before, the graphics are the high point of this mediocre platform contest which has been done

so many times before on the 16-bit systems. Other than the perpetually entertaining musical score, the programmers were stingy in regard to the audio effects, which are not overly impressive. My main gripe concerns the harsh controls. One must employ near-perfect timing when dealing with the majority of enemies. I've often found myself turning red in the face while manipulating the sluggish controls. This title gets an average rating at best when compared to other 16-bit titles of this genre.

Pink Goes to Hollywood is just another in a long line of cartoon/movie titles which cannot feed upon the big screen's success. Tip: timing is the key to success. React a split second early in order to counteract the sluggish controls.

TWISTED

ELECTRONIC ARTS, FOR 3DO



EA presents a fresh new look in contrast to the one-dimensional game shows produced in real life. Two to four participants vie to be-

come the first to reach the top of a spiraling staircase (called "the pallindrome"). Along the way, you answer assorted trivia, recreate pictures, zap commercials on a grid, play concentration via sounds or pictures, match a trio of faces, or test your memory by selecting items off of store shelves. The graphics and sounds - especially the actors, are crisp and well rendered. Providing comic relief are corny commercials which occasionally interrupt the game. Overall, this is a must-see game when having a group of people over, but after repeated play the material loses its appeal. 7

VENTURE

COLECO, ATARI, FOR ATARI 2600

In Venture, the object of the game is to collect treasures located in dungeons or "rooms." All types of dungeon monsters make it all the harder for you because they protect the treasures you are trying to obtain. Winky, the smiling character which you control, is equipped with a bow and arrow for defense. If you spend too much time in a room, a hall monster will enter and chase you till your death. Your arrows will not kill

this "Winky-seeking" monster so you've got to move out of the dungeon as



fast as possible. One frustrating factor of the game is that Winky moves painfully slow. It's even hard to dodge attacking monsters without losing a life. Dodging monsters is an important skill in the game because you must grab the treasure before you shoot a dungeon monster or no points are awarded. There is a room which has no monsters protecting the treasure. Instead, it has moving electric walls. Run into a wall and Winky loses a life. It takes precise timing to reach the treasure in this room.

The game consists of two halls of chambers or "floors." After completing floor two, the game returns to floor one, but the monsters move faster! Despite the slow movement of Winky and not-so-great graphics, the game is entertaining. It's not a new game at all. Coleco first released it in 1982 and Atari obtained rights in 1988 to re-release the game. Pick up Venture and go treasure hunting. It's a lot of fun! - Tim Duarte

JR. PAC MAN

COLECO, ATARI, FOR ATARI 2600

I'm sure there are any number of reasons that unreleased "classic" videogames went unreleased. Consider the unreleased games for the Atari 5200. Many of the titles just didn't cut it. While I've never seen 5200 Tempest, for example, Atari had announced the game as forthcoming and had been working on it for what seemed like eons before it became apparent that it would never come out. I'm guessing that Atari concluded that 5200 Tempest just wasn't very good. Atari also pulled the plug on various projects before they were ever completed; Sport Goofy serves as one example, and Miniature Golf another. Years ago I explored the prospect of buying a Miniature Golf proto and was told by the seller that it wasn't even worth the \$15 he was asking because it was mainly a bunch of lines and basically wasn't playable.

Probably the most desirable of prototypes for collectors fall into the category of games that were more or less completed and ready for market but did not come out, mainly because of the videogame "crash." I'd wager that 5200 Junior Pac-Man falls into this category. Junior, along with Xevious, Track and Field, Millipede, and a couple others, were announced as forthcoming 5200 titles around the time that Atari announced the 7800. As is commonly known, when the Tramiels bought out Atari in 1984, they put the 7800 on hold and they put the 5200 to death.

It's a shame, because Junior is a top notch product. The prototype that I picked up many years ago is very close to the arcade counterpart, featuring the beanie-clad Pac, the cheery music, and the smooth-scrolling, ever-changing mazes of the original. I think Junior really had a niche in the Pac-crowded 5200 library because the game really does have a different feel to it. As most gamers know, the prizes (in this game little toys) bounce around the maze, a la Ms. Pac, but in their travels they turn regular dots into larger, high point dots that slow Junior down. If the prize bounces over to one of your power dots, it will destroy it. Since there is no instruction manual, we'll never know exactly why toys destroy power dots; it's another part of the tragedy associated with the videogame crash. But these new features add a lot to the Pac formula.

This game is virtually complete and, if you can get a copy burned, it is worth picking up. I say "virtually com-

Pandom Reviews Lite

plete" because there are a couple of qualifiers. There are no cartoon intermissions in the game I have (I presume they were to be added) and there is one bug. If the player dies while the toy is eating a power dot, the power dot does not leave the screen. It just flashes rather oddly and then there is nothing the player can do to get rid of it. Run over it all you like—you can't eat it. This means, in sum, that if you die while a power dot is being munched, you can't clear the screen and your game is basically over. It's not that big a deal; you just have to be sure that you either prevent your power dots from being eaten or you keep yourself healthy while your power pill is being consumed.

Relative to the badly flawed 5200 Pac-Man and the improved but nevertheless so-so 5200 Ms. Pac, control in this game is remarkably good. I think the difficulty level, however, could have used some tweaking. Perhaps it's because I just don't know the strategies, but this one seems frustratingly difficult. The ghosts are extraordinarily intelligent and relentless, and the great escapes that make Ms. Pac so much fun are extremely difficult to pull off here. Still, I think that Junior Pac-Man (along the other completed 5200 projects killed by the Tramiels) would have been a solid seller if it had been allowed to see the light of day.—Jeff Cooper

ALLIA QUEST

EBIVISION, FOR ATARI 2600

This is another homebrew cart from Igor Barzilai of Ebivision. There were only 40 copies available at CGE2K1 and they were sold at the DP booth. Igor showed up with all he had ready, stayed a while, then had to catch a plane. The cart came packaged complete with box, label and instructions. I asked Igor about how he got the title. He told me that "Allia" was just a word that he coined because he was looking for an "A__A" word to fit his logo shape.



This game is a decent shooter noteworthy for its large, colorful sprites. Instead of the usual black outer space background, Igor has created an interesting backdrop of twinkling stars. It looks like a starry night sky. This game is not a clone, but an original program. The closest game it resembles is Megamania,

but with more undulating attackers. You do not actually move your ship, the background moves instead. The enemies can wrap around if you move too far left or right. So you have to be careful. There are eight different waves, each containing a fleet of 20 fighters. The next series is the same, but with different colors. You get 3 lives and no replenishments. Since the waves were not named, I have given them my own pet names for reference: 1) Hamburgers (a little stingy on the meat though—where's the beef? 2) Star Fighters (these look a lot like tanks) 3) Phoenix 4) Bottlecaps (except these are square) 5) Bottle brushes (or feather dusters) 6) Stacking squares 7) Beacon (very tricky searchlights and

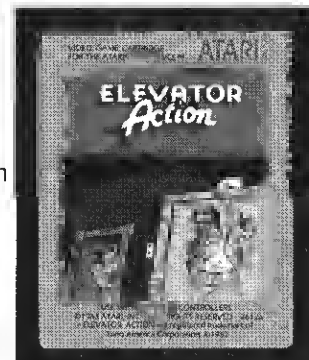
beams) 8) Octopi (or mushrooms)

My personal best was 91,900. I would like to break 100K. Sometimes the last enemy on the screen is tough to kill.—Al Backiel (8)

ELEVATOR ACTION

TAITO, FOR ATARI 2600

This Atari prototype is not complete, but it is still fully playable. I have not experienced any crashes yet. It was sold in limited quantities (est. 150-200) at CGE2K1. The cart comes complete with an authentic looking Atari box, label and instructions. Very nice touch! The artwork is derived from the actual arcade machine. It looks like something straight out of Atari. There was a more complete release on the NES, but I haven't actually played it. There were Game Boy and GBC versions and a Sega Saturn import titled *Elevator Action Returns*. To me, *Elevator Action* sounds like a scene from an X-rated movie.



This prototype captures the essence on the coin-op. The playfield is a cross section of a multi-story building with elevators and escalators used for moving from floor to floor. The objective is to enter as many red doors as you can for points. In this case just touching them is enough. Reaching the street level also completes the level. Then when you exit off-screen, you wind up on the roof of another 30-story building. Of course there is always something to make it more challenging. Every floor has enemies shooting at you in the hallways. I guess it must be in the Bronx! Actually, this game is spy vs. spies (worth 100 pts.). The doors contain secret documents (worth 500 pts.).

The major elements that are missing are sound and gravity. Sound and music would have been added later. The law of gravity is suspended because you can jump up and hang in the air (ala Michael Jordan) to dodge bullets. You can also crouch down to avoid gunfire. There are also escalators, as in *Keystone Kapers*. Here they look more like steps. Some gamers have complained that there are sometimes long waits for the elevator. Hey, doesn't that make it more realistic? The only thing I can think of is that maybe by backtracking a little it might reset things. The game does require some patience; at least you're not playing against the clock. You can hold the elevators between floors, which is useful sometimes to avoid running into traps.

Just for contrast, I popped in the more primitive *Infiltrate* (by Apollo), which has a similar theme. Here the elevators move up and down like pistons. This is worse than waiting since it is very frustrating to jump on and off. This game is totally unfair because the enemies pop up all over the place and can also use the elevators.

My top score on EA was 89,000+. I don't know exactly because the score does not stay up at game over. I did maybe 7 buildings. They vary in color scheme. There is a 2-player option.—Al Backiel



ROMpage by Sean Kelly

OK, let's get back into some REAL ROMPaging! There has been an imposter penning this column for the past few issues... someone not even fit to iron my cape for me! He may make an appearance in here from time to time if he's not too busy shining my boots, but never fear. I am always lurking in the shadows waiting for my chance to pounce someone and make their life a **LIVING HELL!**

I just got back from CGE a couple weeks ago and made a killing selling all the exclusive games on eBay. I was even able to lie and steal my way into a few extra copies of Elevator Action so those puppies will be on eBay for months to come. I've already put a down-payment on my new Lexus with the dough I made on the Combat II's I snaked from Marc O. But maybe instead of slapping them up on eBay, I'll smash them to bits with a sledgehammer? Or perhaps I should set fire to one as sort of an experiment to see how hot an Atari cartridge has to get before it starts to melt. Those damn Venture II wooden boxes he used to put his cartridges into are garbage. I put one under the leg of my desk to keep it from wobbling so much and the damn thing just crushed under the weight. What's up with that??

Well, you might have guessed where I'm going with this by now. Those of you who haven't may want to set this issue of DP aside and wait until my understudy comes back with one of his "columns". The bitching and crying that's been going on about the CGE exclusive titles just astounds me! I don't see the problem here at all.

Some guy decides to write a new game for one of the classic systems. Most people do it as a challenge - just to see if they can. They spend several months writing it and a couple more tweaking it. The game actually works and is kind of fun to play. Put yourself in their shoes and ask yourself what's the next logical step. Well, you've just spent 4-6 months writing and testing the game, why not see if you can make a few bucks for yourself? So here we go again... you need a label, instructions, and maybe some sort of packaging. Wait a minute though! You can't even draw a stick-man and your cat has a better chance of writing an intelligently written manual than you do. No, you're not stupid. You just figured out how to write a videogame to run on a system with only 128 BYTES of RAM, but you don't do the art and writing thing very well. Well, you find a guy on the net who will do the artwork for you if you slip him a couple copies of the cart and you take a shot at writing the manual yourself. You're stylin' now!

So you're all ready-to-roll now. Your label and manual are done. A few people have tested the game and they all think it's alot of fun. What's a soldering iron by the way? Holy shit! You mean I have to sit here and program my game onto chips and put them into car-

tridges? How the hell do I get all this stuff I've just typed-out in Notepad onto a computer CHIP?? So you start scrounging around for info and find out you'll need to buy an EPROM programmer. You snag a programmer and a find some used EPROMs on eBay at a decent price so you're in business.

The EPROM software takes a little getting used to, but you get the hang of it and now have a programmed EPROM with your game on it. You take- apart an old cartridge that after you scrape all the crud off of it, you come to realize it was a Combat at some point. Inside is a small circuit board with one chip on it. Cool! This chip is exactly the same number of pins that my EPROM is. I'll just pull it off and put my EPROM in it's place. Removing the Combat chip is no small task and when all is said and done, you've ruined the circuit board because several traces came off along with the chip. Common Atari 2600 cartridges are still plentiful so you grab a Yar's Revenge off the stack and set to work on it. Despite the fact that you just wasted an hour and a half on the Combat that's now in the garbage, you vow to be more careful this time.

The Yar's Revenge chip is now removed and you start soldering your EPROM onto the board. That fine point on the soldering iron you bought at Radio Shack only soldered about six pins before the tip melted so you're out another ten bucks and head back to Radio Shack for a better iron. FINALLY, the EPROM is soldered in-place and you hear a drum-roll as you plug the cartridge into your 2600. **THE DAMN THING DOESN'T WORK!!**

After an hour of inspecting the board for mistakes you might have made in removing the Yar's chip or soldering your EPROM you hit the net looking for info as to what the hell you did wrong. You come to find out that just because the chip you removed from the board had the same number of pins as your EPROM, that doesn't mean the chips are completely compatible. As it turns-out, you either have to install what's called an "inverter chip" or you have to purchase a homebrew circuit board designed to play Atari 2600 games from EPROMs.

OK, this is it...you have your inverter chip installed. It's just sort of dangling there, but you don't care - you just want to see your game playing on a real Atari 2600. You can figure out what you're going to do in the way of a circuit board later. You plug the circuit board in and the game works this time. After playing the game for a little while, you sit back and just sort of stare at the screen for a few minutes after which you let out a resounding

"THIS SUCKS!!!!"

Originally, your only intention was to write a game for just to see if you could do it. The childhood memories of picturing the people

who wrote these games as God-like combined with the tools and emulators that make it possible for anyone with a computer to write an Atari game were just too much to ignore. The idea of making a couple bucks out of the deal came later, but became nearly as strong a notion. What's involved in producing actual cartridges for people to play on their consoles came as a complete surprise.

Not only did you need to learn how to program a very limited system, you also had to take a crash course in electronics, remind yourself that you have absolutely no artistic talent, and figure out what's the most efficient way to remove 20 years of crud from Atari cartridges.

The cartridges are done and they look great. You figure your best shot at selling a bunch of them in one sitting is to bring them out to Classic Gaming Expo in Las Vegas. You'll probably be able to sell all the cartridges you can stand making there and you'll come home with a few bucks in your pocket not to mention the fact that you'll probably have a great time hanging-out in Las Vegas with other classic game fans. So you announce it on the newsgroups that your new game will make its debut at CGE. Immediately, you're bombarded with emails from people saying they won't be able to make it to CGE and could they buy one from you directly. Well, no, you can't buy one now. This is what I was trying to avoid in the first place. The next round of emails isn't quite so polite and the phrase "You are pond scum", to put it lightly, becomes very familiar to you.

Here you are...you write a 2600 game, decide to make it available in as large a quantity as you can handle, the only "fun" part of this process was over after you had written the game and people are busting your balls about it? To hell with this! You decide not to make any cartridges at all!

Parts of this scenario actually played-out prior to CGE 2001. Although not all aspects were experienced by one person, many of these issues actually did happen. What I have attempted to show here is just how much work is involved in developing and producing a game by a homebrew author as well as how many different "skills" have to be learned.

The thing that really pisses me off is that some people actually have the balls to give these homebrew authors a hard time! They go through all the bullshit involved in making carts available for people and no matter what they do or how they do it, it's still not good enough. Case in point: Venture II. While the game is really just Venture with changed graphics, Tim Snider went to great lengths in his packaging enclosing every cartridge in a little

wooden treasure chest nested inside "gold" paper making it look like a treasure. When Tim announced to the newsgroups that he would have them available at CGE but there would only be 20 copies made, he was bombarded with hate mail. So much in fact, that he pulled the game and did not offer it at CGE at all. What the hell is wrong with people?!

I suppose it's possible that people just don't know what's involved in making a homebrew game, but I'd have to lean more towards them not caring. These guys put alot of time into making these games and have the right to choose where and how they will sell it not to mention how many they will sell. There is no God-given right that says you have to have the opportunity to own every game there is. That's not even taking into consideration that you DO have an opportunity to own the game however.

I'm sick and tired of all this "I'm not rich enough to run out to Las Vegas and attend CGE" bullshit! A plane ticket from anywhere in the country can be had for no more than \$400. You can't afford to set-aside \$1 a day? Yeah, I know...there's hotel expenses and food as well. So can you manage \$2 per day? Cut one package of Ho-Ho's out of your daily food intake and you're there! What about spending money? Well sell some of your extra stuff on eBay or have a garage sale or go to your local blood bank and sell a pint of blood a week. I simply refuse to believe that some of these guys can afford to "waste" money from time to time buying old videogames and can't scrape-together a few bucks once a year to make it to CGE. CGE is going on it's fifth year in 2002 which means you've had the past four years to try and set-aside a few bucks to make it out there. If you've attended at least once and it's not your cup of tea - fine. I have no problem with that whatsoever. Those of you who have never been there yet insist on bitching and crying after the show every year about the stuff you were unfairly cheated out of can kiss my ass!

You might as well get used to the idea...there will be exclusive games offered at CGE every year no matter how much you cry about it. It's a convenient place for people to release their homebrew stuff as well as prototypes that are being made available in limited quantities. Those of us responsible for running the show will do all we can to entice a few more people out to a show we spend A LOT of time and money putting-together. The show has grown from 200 people at World of Atari to over 1000 at CGE 2001 and if even 10% of that growth is due to the various games released at the show, it was well worth it. Each year we see hundreds of people who had to be very creative in gathering the funds to attend and purchase a few games at the show. If you can't manage to do the same, then it just sucks to be you.

ARCADE ANTICS



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In Defense of Our Hobbies

In a past issue, I mentioned the plight of two hobbies: train collecting and video gaming - along with common misconceptions about both. It has occurred to me that most if not all hobbies suffer this. A hobby is a great diversion from one's job and other responsibilities when they don't need immediate attention. They can involve any age group, either sex, and all incomes.

Here is the problem: somebody asks you what your interests are, you tell that person about your hobby, and derogatory replies follow. There are at least two solutions besides taking a lead pipe and beating the daylights out of that person (I wouldn't recommend this - but there are those who probably deserve it!). Solution one: ask the wise-ass if he/she has a hobby. If the answer is "yes", ask this question: "Would you like me to tell you what I think about YOUR hobby?". If the answer is "no", you can always insult that person with a "Get a life" reply, but of course that brings you down to their level. Instead, ask them this question: "Didn't you ever have a childhood? Perhaps you were an asshole from birth?", which of course, does not.

Another problem lies within the hobbyists themselves. There are people I call "Specialist/Snobs". This is the type of person who concentrates on just one facet of the hobby. Not that there's anything wrong with that, the problem occurs when Joe General Hobbyist comes along and is ridiculed for not taking the same interest, being unfocused, etc. Who the hell needs that? In my opinion, anyone sharing your interests should at least be considered part of that hobby's community. Instead of hurting that member, help them out with the knowledge you have. Refer them to books, magazines, and videos about that particular subject. Here's an example: one of the people I work with is a train collector interested specifically in Pennsylvania Railroad items. While I do not model them, I was able to share with him the location of a hobby shop containing books on Pennsylvania Railroad items.

We're all part of the same family here. Help, don't hinder!

Stop The Stupidity!

Well once again, our elected I mean elected officials along with so-called watchdog groups are on a piss and moan mission regarding videogame violence, the effects on our children, and our morality in general. They say that the current ratings system is not good enough and the industry needs to do more. To save face, they mention that parents need to get involved. No shit, Sherlock!!!! The industry shouldn't have to make any further changes nor do we want or need any further regulation. Allow me to give you a little history lesson where other hobbies came under fire. Back in the fifties, there was controversy with some people sniffing the fumes of model airplane glue. A big stink was raised regarding it. The hobby industry quelled the controversy by introducing a chemical that smelled so bad that it turned people off to sniffing said fumes. Thus, the hobby was saved. More recently, during the eighties, red flags were going up regarding Dungeons and Dragons. Some thought it was promoting Satanism. In one instance, if memory serves me. A child killed either his parents, a sibling, or a friend because he said he was a creature called a Mindflayer. I think he was charged with first degree murder. He tried to blame the game for his behavior. But it was not to be and D&D is still with us. My point is, use some common sense. Here's the dillio. Gamers, If you have little ones tell them flat out that there are some games that are inappropriate for them and tell them why. If you let them play such a game, supervise, tell them that it is a fantasy, it's not real, don't even try to imitate. Keeping a watchful eye on them also helps. If you work in a retail environment and a kid wants to purchase a game full of sex, violence and inappropriate language. Tell that person to come back with the parent(s) and show the parent(s) what their offspring was interested in getting.

Another idea is to divide the games according to their ratings. Use color-coded stickers for better identifying. In the hobby shop where I work, color-coded stickers are used in the pricing of our diecast vehicles. It really works. Of course, it's been said before, if you don't like it, don't buy it. Let your wallet do the talking. I cannot stress this enough. If we use our heads, maybe just maybe, the bureaucrats and other nutcases will stay out of hairs. Don't let this hobby go down the tubes. What are your ideas and/or solutions?

SUPERCADE REVIEW AND INTERVIEW

WITH VAN BURNHAM

by Joe Santulli

STELLAR. I've had a few people ask me what I thought of Van Burnham's first book: *Supercade: A Visual History of the Videogame Age 1971-1984*, and the word that continually comes to mind is STELLAR.

Books about retro video gaming seem to be the latest rage, with books by John Sellers (*Arcade Fever*), Steve Kent (*The First Quarter*) and Jaro Gielens (*Electronic Plastic*) joining veteran Leonard Herman (*Phoenix*) and a slew of others in the works. But Van has gone a different route, concentrating in equal parts on imagery and lore. *Supercade* is a gorgeous book. A glamorous book. It's the kind of book that demands to be kept on the coffee table. But it's also a stunning documentary, which makes it something more than just a coffee table book.

For 448 pages you'll experience the birth and growth of our favorite pastime, with Van leading us through the origins of both arcade and home machines with the help of an impressive array of industry legends. Drawing on the personal experience of the "Father of Video Games" Ralph Baer and the founder of Atari Nolan Bushnell, among others, each page gives you the feeling that you are THERE. The highlight of the book for me is the first 100 pages which detail in both words and pictures the events at Brookhaven National Labs, where physicist William Higinbotham invented the first electronic game (*Tennis for Two*) in 1958; "Building 20" at MIT and the origins of *Spacewar!*; the original "brown box" TV Game Project by Ralph Baer; and the birth of Atari. This is to date the most interesting account of those early years.

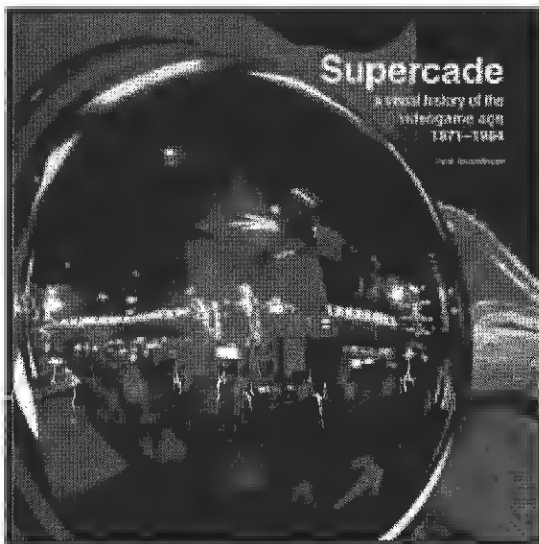
There's so much to love about *Supercade* beyond it's visual account of history. The typically dead-on use of the primitive graphics of these early years is effectively sprinkled throughout its pages. Interviews with notable personalities Tim Skelly and Walter Day as well as brilliant guest submissions by Leonard Herman, Steven Kent, and even our own Keita Iida lend additional substance to an already substance-packed compendium. Look carefully into the nooks and crannies of the book and you'll find loads of rare items beautifully photographed, and trivia in every little corner (do you know what the historical significance of the coin-op *Radarscope* is? Better take a look!).

Supercade is a history book. It is a vivid snapshot of a vivid era. But most of all, it is an account

of the time and pastime that, if you're reading this, has affected and shaped your life in some way.

I was able to catch up with Van in-between her various engagements to talk a little about *Supercade*.

DP: This is really more than a book – it's a work of art! How long did it take you to compile all of those wonderful pages into one final product? Tell us about any unforeseen circumstances that may have come about during the process or stories behind the making of it.



VAN: Thank you so much. The concept for *Supercade: A Visual History of the Videogame Age 1971-1984* came to me in 1998. I had been collecting classic videogames for about five years and kept visualizing the book I wanted to have. I imagined something that captured the dynamic of videogames as well as their culture, presented in a format that conveyed the impact of the videogame phenomenon. After a while, I realized that maybe I was the one who was supposed to write it. So, I found a publisher and started working on *Supercade* in 1999.

When I look back at the layouts from my initial proposal, it's amazing how much has changed and how much has stayed the same. It's funny, because if I had stuck to my original content outline, the book would be over eight hundred pages long! As for interesting stories, the original title of the book was *Supercade: Context and Aesthetics of the Videogame Age*, but a focus group thought it sounded way too academic. So, it was changed. I like the new title much better.

DP: What makes your book different than others like Leonard Herman's *Phoenix*, John Sellers' *Arcade Fever*, or Digital Press' *Collector's Guide*. Assume I've already got those other books and am not sure why I should buy yours. Sell it to me!



VAN: You forgot to mention Jaro Gielens' *Electronic Plastic*, which is one of my favorites. I love all of these books, and feel they each have their own perspective that makes them well worth owning. To be honest, I don't feel comfortable debating why my book would be "better," other than saying that it's the heaviest. I'm kidding. *Supercade* is really a totally different experience. The book is unique in that it's a large format hard-cover "coffee-table" style book with full-color images throughout. Also, the content covers both home and arcade videogames, and features con-

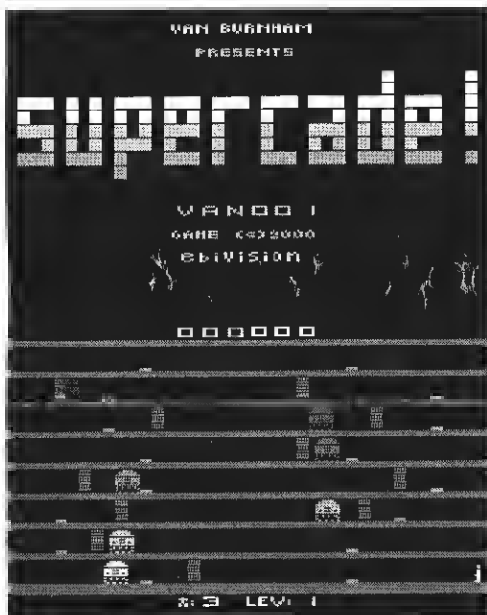
tributions from some fantastic writers - from industry veterans to con temporary game journalists to cultural commentators - including Steven Kent, Tom Vanderbilt, William Cassidy, Chris Charla, Warren Davis, Justin Hall, Steven Johnson, Ryan Lockhart, Nick Montfort, Bob Parks, and Marc Saltzman, as well as Leonard Herman who wrote an absolutely brilliant chapter on the Atari VCS.

DP: What is your favorite snack food?

VAN: CHEETOS! No, I'm kidding again. My favorite snack food is probably Tim's Cascade Style Grilled Steak & Onion Potato Chips. Tim's totally rules the chip universe. These radical snack mavericks also offer Alder Smoke Barbeque, Coney Island Hot Dog, and Zesty Dill Pickle flavored chips for steak-adverse snackers. As a matter of fact, I am enjoying one now.

DP: At CGE 2000 you demonstrated the game *Escape from Supercade*, an Atari 2600 game designed by EbiVision that was to be released in tandem with the book to a select number of customers. What's the latest on this?

VAN: Owing to a chip shortage, I was forced to push back the release to later this year. I'm hoping to have the carts completed just in time for the holidays. Just wait until you see the packaging!



DP: Of the personalities you interacted with to put *Supercade* together, who made the most lasting impression on you, and why?

VAN: Having the opportunity to meet all of my gaming heroes - people like Ralph Baer, Nolan Bushnell, Tim Skelly, and Shigeru Miyamoto - was one of the great pleasures in writing this book. I have been inspired by all of them.

DP: Was there anyone that you would

have liked to have met while writing this book, living or deceased, but could not?

VAN: I would have loved the chance to meet Willy Higinbotham before he passed on. And I have yet to meet Eugene Jarvis, programmer of *Defender*. Someday soon, I hope.

DP: What were your favorite games from the era that your book spans? Why?

VAN: My all-time favorite arcade games are *Galaga*, *Pac-Man*, and *Space Ace* for their combination of genius gameplay and classic design, magnified by my personal history with the games. However, I've recently been playing a lot of *Journey*!

DP: You have impeccable taste in games, Van. And since you list *Space Ace* as a favorite, let's settle something. My friends and I argue incessantly on who's "hotter", Princess Daphne (from *Dragon's Lair*) or Kimberly. So let me pose this question: Dirk the Daring or Dexter?

VAN: Dexter without a doubt... space jumpsuits are sexy!

DP: What are your favorite games today? Do they "measure up" to the classics in your opinion?

VAN: As far as arcade games go, I really love



Arctic Thunder (it's air-conditioned!), *Shakattao Tambourine*, *The Grid*, and *Eighteen Wheeler: American Pro Trucker*. At home, I've been playing a lot of Xbox lately and can attest that *Dead Or Alive 3* and *Halo* totally kick ass. I'm also really into *Ka* for PlayStation 2 at the moment. As for "measuring up," I think it's impossible to compare modern games with the classics because they are competing on a totally different level... it's like trying to compare *The Adventures of Snow White* and *Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within*. You just can't.

DP: Then I'm not wording the question properly. Let me put it this way: you have two hours and every machine is on free-play. Do you spend most of your time on the older arcade machines or the newer ones?

VAN: It totally depends on what I'm in the mood for... however, I tend to gravitate toward the classics.

DP: If you could date ANY classic video game journalist in the field today, who would it be (note that there is only one correct answer to this question), and what would be your perfect date?

VAN: Well, you're married so I know that isn't the answer!

Actually, my boyfriend occasionally writes for *The Edge* and kicks serious ass at *Robotron*... so I think he qualifies as a classic game journalist! As for a perfect date, well, that would be today. This afternoon, we went to Hi-Score arcade - a totally awesome classic video arcade in downtown Seattle (which is sadly closing on the 29th of this month) - and played *Galaga*, *Tempest*, and the pinball game *Attack From Mars*. After that we went to see the Vans Triple Crown Free-style Motocross, sponsored by Xbox. All in all, it was a totally excellent gamer date.

DP: Ha ha! WRONG answer! Okay then... what's NEXT for you?

VAN: I'm launching a new electronic entertainment magazine early next year called *SUPER*. Right now I'm working on the preview issue which is going to be published as a special holiday gaming supplement in the December issue of *Gear Magazine*. So be sure to check it out! I'm also beginning to work on the sequel to *Supercade* which will cover the years 1985-2001. My editor is calling it *Son of Supercade*! I'm hoping to do a box set for holiday 2002...

DP: Thanks, Van! Hopefully everyone reading this has already ordered or owns your book. Otherwise they'll simply be laughed at and have tomatoes thrown at them when they are in public places. I'd just hate to see that happen.

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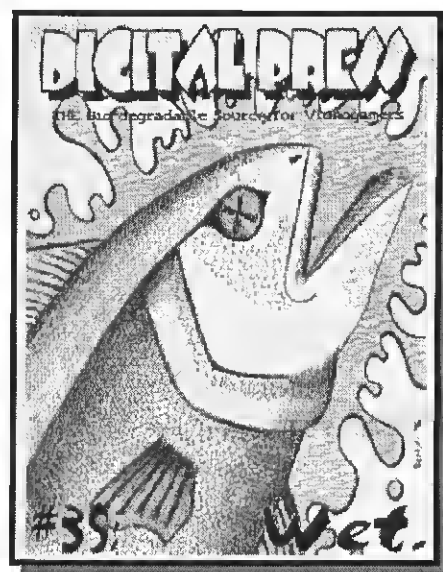
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Some video game publications pride themselves on being there "first". We're a little different. Since Digital Press readers consist primarily of multi-system owners of hundreds (some of us thousands) of game cartridges, our world has become one where time is meaningless and being "first" doesn't count. Atari 2600 and Playstation 2 games can be reviewed on the same page. We are fans of gaming, not of any particular system. Do you have a constant desire to play? Then join us - subscribe now! It's STILL just ten bucks for six issues.

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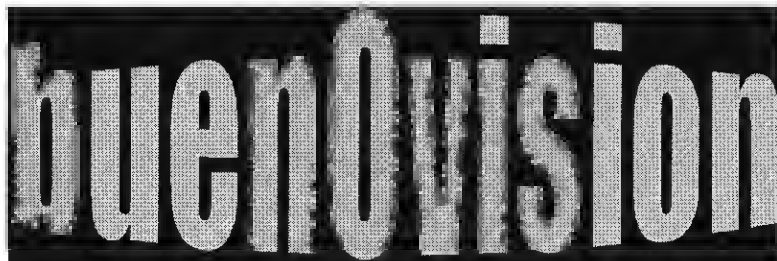
(Continued from page 12)

"humanoids" who race back and forth on the platforms. Also killer satellites, which roam about the screen in various orbits. Both are fatal to the touch, so their patterns need to be analyzed. It is sometimes possible to grab coins from overhanging platforms, by jumping straight up in the air. The bonus icons that surface from time to time provide invincibility, which is a necessary strategy to completing the levels and also for freezing your foe in the path of the humanoids or killer satellites. As you might guess, there are strategy and puzzle solving elements to this game.

Starting on a specific level would have been nice. This is one thing I didn't like. It gets redundant if you have to keep starting from scratch. If time runs out in the one-player version you're screwed. It's all over. This is the second thing I didn't like. It should only cost you a life. This is referred to as the "Countdown To Armageddon" mode. This game is not perfect, but overall it is definitely one of the best for the system.

Part III: Trivia

The alien head you see in this game and on most all Digital Press media is from the ColecoVision game Space Fury (a port of the Sega coin-op) and is the official DP mascot. The original arcade game has voice synthesis with the Alien Commander saying such menacing things like "you are starting to annoy me, creature", "My scouts will destroy you!", and "You were an amusing opponent". The ColecoVision version lost this in the translation, providing instead marquee text challenging you to "prepare for battle". The manual doesn't mention "Easter eggs", but if you hit the # key while on the options screen, you will get the "Today's High Score" screen which holds all eight game variations records until you reset the game or turn off the console. Press the * key there and you will see "n/a" on the bottom. At one point, each Ms. Space Fury cart was going to be individually numbered, but that wasn't executed in time for the production run, thus the "not available" message. There was also going to be a cheat for unlimited lives, but the storage was needed elsewhere. If you reach the 20th level, you will see the message "Happy 10th Anniversary" posted. If you finish this final level, you get the message "You Win" and a little fanfare. At this point hit the # to reset. The title screen will come up, then the screen with the alien, then a new hidden screen will appear which contains an ad for other games by Bienvenu and de Chantal. So far around 100 carts have wound up in collector's hands. There are lots of subtle things that one may notice such as the initials 'DP' on some of the platforms. How some of the power-ups resemble some of the original Space Invaders or TV's or masks. I have completed the game on the easy level. I still like playing this game, so now I will attempt the harder levels.



Why Territorial Lockouts?

I've been meaning to share my opinions on this topic for several years, and I think now is the perfect time to do so. The incompatibility of U.S. and Japanese systems is something I've found irritating ever since I was forced to alter the cartridge slot of my SNES to play Super Famicom games. Now, upon learning of Sony's anti-mod chip lockout in their new software, my annoyance has become all-out exasperation.

I guess it's not so much the fact that I was forced to violate yet another conviction I once held dear (i.e. never to purchase any "game enhancer" cheat device) nor supporting companies I despise almost as much as Nintendo. It's really the pretentiousness and outright contempt Sony and indeed all video game companies have against their most loyal customers. But maybe I'm getting a little ahead of myself, so I'll back up a bit.

Recently I purchased Konami 80's Arcade Gallery for Playstation, fearing it might not work. My fears were confirmed when after loading I was treated to a red circle with slash screen and some foreign instructions probably saying something along the lines of, "This game is designed for use in Japanese systems only..." So if they know it's the Americans they're keeping out, why the hell not write this in English? To my knowledge there's not too many people using modified U.S. systems in Japan (Then again, I'm no expert - stranger things have happened).

My day was exponentially improved when the friendly NCS representative explained that by utilizing a Game Shark (or other similar devices) this hideously oppressive new technology could be defeated. She gave me the codes and after purchasing this device (usually used for evil rather than good), I was once again enjoying timeless classics from my childhood.

It's bad enough Sony, Nintendo, and Sega don't give us access to their complete library of software. In all honesty, I can't see any genuine reason for doing this, and it can't have anything to do with the electrical current like it is with European software (or at least in the past). It is nothing short of mean-spirited, angry, ugly, and bitter resentment of Americans on behalf of these companies. Why else would they deliberately sabotage the U.S. versions of their own products to not play Japanese software? It would certainly take less time and effort to just give both countries the same product and let only die hard, fanatical players (who are, consequently, their most loyal customers) import foreign games that we all know are illegal in the United States. Why not just let the police handle this, for Christ's sake?

I've never heard any of this stated publicly. I think the main reason is because the pro magazines wouldn't want to piss their suppliers off, a good enough reason as any, I suppose. But what other reason could it possibly be other than that these companies simply don't like Americans? Seriously, can anyone give me any better reason? Furthermore, it's partially Americans' fault we're in this situation. Sure they (of should I say WE) have nothing to do with the lockouts in the first place, but our lethargic approach to this and many other important issues is certainly a large factor in its continuation. If enough people bothered to complain or took the time to write and call these companies... well, that probably wouldn't work either. Now I'm being too idealistic. Never mind.

I sincerely hope that there will come a day when players of all nationalities may enjoy foreign as well as domestic software without any form of modification to their system. Players should be judged not on the country of their origin but on the numbers in their scores. Territorial lockout technology serves only to increase resentment and hostility amongst video game enthusiasts of all countries.

WHICH PROTOTYPE
GAME FEATURED IN
OUR LAST ISSUE WAS
PHONIER THAN
"MK NITRO"?

HERE WE GO WITH THE FIRST EVER DP FOLD-IN

Prototype games have been discovered all around the globe for just about every "classic" system. Many of these games were studied in our last issue, but one of them was a fake. To find out which of those games was completely bogus, fold in the page as shown.

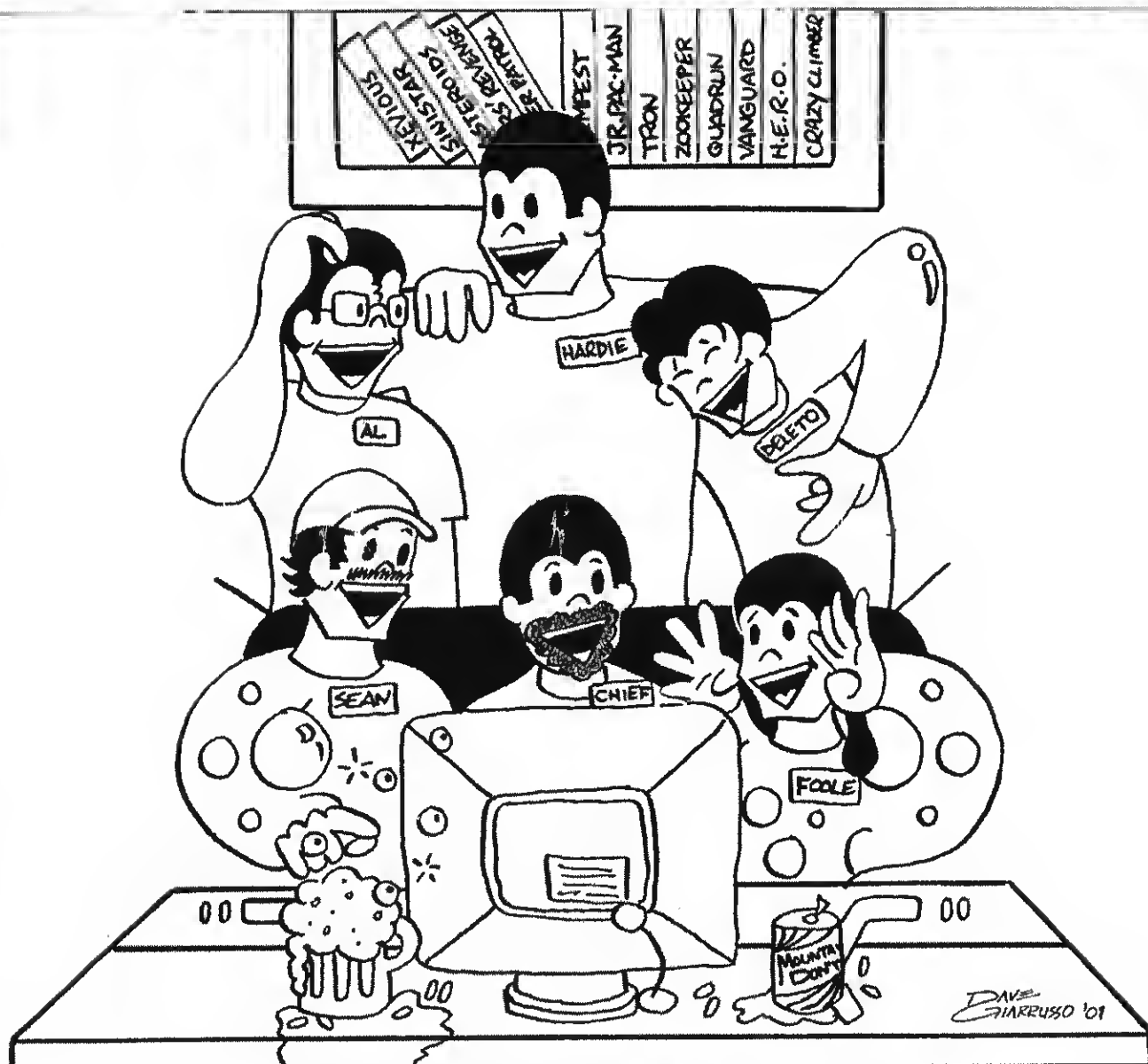


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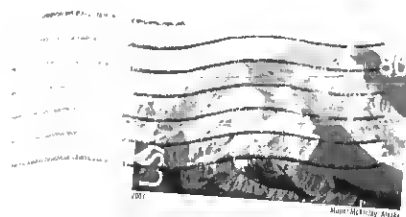
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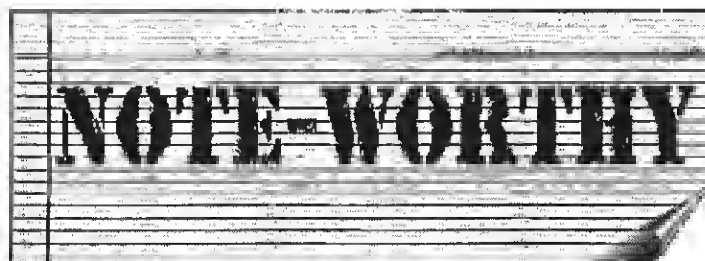
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what Jeff did!

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superman 2 for atari 2600?

Chris Cavanaugh (Editor of Classic Gamer Magazine) sent us this screenshot from what appears to be a sequel to the Atari VCS classic! Please send all complaints to Chris at www.classicgamer.com

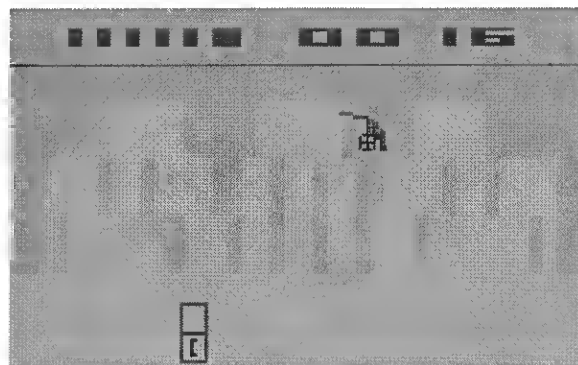
bruce lee Lives!

The final version of the DataSoft classic "Bruce Lee" is now available for the PC. It is based on the original Commodore 64 version of the game. You can download it, view development history, and see screenshots from this link:

www.planetflibble.com/blitz

new wizard of wor high score

Jeff Folejewski (one of the PhillyClassic organizers and Adventure-vision aficionado) set the new record on the coin-op. Take a look at



Digital Press is dedicated to the memory of my best friend
and DP co-creator, Kevin Cleniacz.
Kevin's spirit will be with us through every homing missile fired, knockout punch delivered, UFO destroyed, and finish line crossed.

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